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THE TEACHING OF READING, A REPORT OF A STUDY CONDUCTED BY THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE OF THE MINNEAPOLIS CITIZENS COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION, JUNE, 1966.

BY- WITTCOFF, HAROLD AND OTHERS

MINNEAPOLIS CITIZENS COMM. ON PUB. EDUC., MINN.

PUB DATE JUN 66

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.27 HC-\$7.24 181P.

DESCRIPTORS- *READING INSTRUCTION, INITIAL TEACHING ALPHABET, PHONICS, CULTURAL DISADVANTAGEMENT, MENTALLY HANDICAPPED, PROGRAMED INSTRUCTION, REMEDIAL INSTRUCTION, *ELEMENTARY GRADES, LANGUAGE ENRICHMENT, *BEGINNING READING, READING READINESS, PARENT RESPONSIBILITY, PARENT INFLUENCE, INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION, MINNEAPOLIS

THIS COMPILATION OF REPORTS, DISCUSSIONS, AND REVIEWS OF SPECIFIC METHODS OF TEACHING READING IN THE ELEMENTARY GRADES INCLUDES A DESCRIPTION OF THE READING PROGRAM IN MINNEAPOLIS. THE METHODS INCLUDED IN THE REPORT ARE THE PHONIC-FIRST METHOD, THE USE OF BASAL READERS, THE LINGUISTIC APPROACH, THE INITIAL TEACHING ALPHABET, THE LANGUAGE-EXPERIENCE APPROACH, THE PROGRAMED READING APPROACH, AND INDIVIDUALIZED READING. OTHER TOPICS COVERED INCLUDE READING READINESS, PARENT READINESS, AND TEACHING THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED, THE MENTALLY RETARDED, THE BRAIN-INJURED, AND THE GIFTED CHILD. (RH)

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THE TEACHING OF READING



A study by the
CURRICULUM COMMITTEE of the
Minneapolis Citizens Committee
on Public Education
June 1966

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THE TEACHING OF READING

A Report of a Study

Conducted by the Curriculum

Committee of the

Minneapolis Citizens Committee on Public Education

June, 1966

Published
by
the

Minneapolis Citizens Committee on Public Education

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* THIS REPORT IS DEDICATED TO ALL PARENTS WHO ARE *
* TRYING TO LEARN AND UNDERSTAND THE MAGNITUDE OF *
* THE PROBLEM OF TEACHING READING. IT IS DEDICATED *
* ALSO TO THE CLASSROOM TEACHERS WHO MAKE THE MAJOR *
* CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUCCESSFUL TEACHING OF *
* READING. *

PURPOSE OF THE MINNEAPOLIS CITIZENS COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

The 1963-66 study of "The Teaching of Reading in the Elementary Grades" was sponsored by the Minneapolis Citizens Committee on Public Education (CCPE) under the direction of its Curriculum Committee, one of several committees studying school problems.

CCPE, now in its thirty-second year, is a non-partisan, lay, fact-finding group with leadership representing a broad segment of the community. Its membership is composed of representatives of more than one hundred community groups and an equal number of individuals who have demonstrated an active interest in public education.

As outlined in its by-laws, its basic purposes are to:

1. Collect, study and disseminate information concerning the public schools;
2. Encourage continuing community recognition of the prime importance of public education in our democracy;
3. Coordinate the work of the member organizations on behalf of the public schools;
4. Work for the strengthening of the public schools.

To accomplish its objectives, the Committee secures information, issues factual material, and studies and discusses school problems. This study of "The Teaching of Reading in the Elementary Grades" is an example of one of its studies. Over the years, CCPE has issued many reports on school administration, curriculum, school finance and construction, and elementary school libraries. Like its predecessors, this new report is the result of extensive and intensive study.

The Committee was founded in 1934 by the Minneapolis Council of Parent-Teachers, Inc., the League of Women Voters, and the Minneapolis Branch, American Association of University Women.

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COMPOSITION AND CHARACTER OF THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Approximately thirty-two persons took part in this study of "The Teaching of Reading". These people represented a cross-section of Minneapolis citizens including representatives of member groups of CCPE. They also represented such diversified occupations as homemakers, business executives, attorneys, scientists, retired teachers, classroom teachers from both public and private schools, and school administrators.

Although they had different points of view, they were united in a common concern for public education and in their belief that the importance of learning to read is the most basic of all education skills.

MINNEAPOLIS CITIZENS COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The guidance and assistance of the following educators is gratefully acknowledged:

- Dr. Robert A. Bennett, Formerly Consultant in Curriculum, Minneapolis Public Schools, and presently Specialist in Language Arts, San Diego California City Schools
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- Dr. Dora V. Smith, Professor Emeritus, University of Minnesota
- Mr. H. G. Tiedeman, The Economy Press, Indianapolis, Indiana
- Dr. Rodney V. Tillman, Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Charge of Elementary Education, Minneapolis Public Schools

We thank the following for use of their facilities for committee meetings:

Fifth Northwestern National Bank of Minneapolis
Minneapolis Branch, American Association of University Women
Minneapolis Hearing Society
Minneapolis School Administration

A TRIBUTE TO MRS. CYRILLA SCHIMSCHOCK

The CCPE Curriculum Committee wishes to pay special tribute to Mrs. Cyrilla Schimschock, a member of our group, who passed away in October, 1965.

Mrs. Schimschock was a teacher and reading specialist for over twenty-five years. She operated a reading tutoring school and helped hundreds of children to overcome their reading difficulties.

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions she made to our work and to the field of remedial reading as a whole.

We will remember her especially for her enthusiasm in trying new methods, her willingness to share the knowledge she gained through years of experience, and her dedication to the cause of public education.

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The specific reports represent the views of the respective authors. They do not necessarily represent a consensus of the Committee's thinking. These individual reports, however, have provided the basis for the Objectives, Summary, Resumé, and Conclusions which do represent a consensus.

WHY A STUDY OF READING?

Never before in history has there been a greater obligation on the part of all nations to encourage their youth to utilize intellectual capacity to the fullest. The amount of actual information, scientific and otherwise, available in the world doubled in the period from 1700 to 1900. It doubled again between 1900 and 1950. By 1960 it had doubled once again. Thus, the amount of recorded knowledge in the world is doubling once every ten years. There is little reason to believe that the rate of increase will not accelerate.

It has been estimated* that by the year 2000 we shall need one scientific technician for every forty people in the United States. Most assuredly we shall need at least as many social scientists. Computers, automation, conquest of the atom and the desire to conquer space have made our twentieth century society one in which knowledge and trained intelligence are becoming the basic tools of progress. Indeed, automation is rendering unskilled labor obsolete.

Basic to the accumulation and utilization of the knowledge demanded by our new age is communication; critical among communication skills is reading.

The question, "What is reading?" is widely discussed. The mechanical decoding of letters into the speech sounds and subsequently the words they represent is certainly reading. But this very statement brings forth immediately an important question. What about understanding and insight as functions of reading? What about reading as a creative process? What about reading as a source of pleasure? As a means for self-fulfillment?

The teaching of reading is not the simple matter it was "in the good old days" which many of us in middle age regard so fondly. The concept of universal education, although well understood and basic to American democracy, was still not fully implemented in "the good old days". The child who had not learned to read by the sixth grade went largely unnoticed because he did not have to continue his education. Today, in contrast, almost every school needs three reading programs:

- a. A developmental program for all students.
- b. A continuing remedial program for the student who has not progressed at an acceptable rate.
- c. A sophisticated program including speed reading, rapid comprehension techniques and enriched reading content for the child capable of utilizing such a program.

*Brown, Bonner and Weir, "The Next Hundred Years", New York, The Viking Press, 1957, p. 120.

These points and a great many more emerged during 1962-63 when the Citizens Committee devoted its season's program to the problems of communications curriculum. It became obvious that certain members of the Citizens Committee wanted to delve further into these problems. On May 8, 1963, accordingly, an initial meeting was held to form a subcommittee for intensive study. Interest was high, and a program for the study of the teaching of elementary reading as an integral part of the communications curriculum of the public school system was undertaken.

OUR OBJECTIVES

What can a lay group hope to accomplish by studying the highly technical subject of the teaching of reading? There are literally tens of thousands of publications on this subject, varying from short articles to lengthy textbooks. There are numerous authorities on the subject and there is by no means a community of thinking among these authorities. Indeed, their terminology is far from consistent. Our Committee sifted through much of this material and decided on the following objectives:

- A. To gain an understanding of the various methods which are used for the teaching of reading. This involves an understanding of the mechanics of the method, its advantages and limitations and its scope of applicability. Important also is an understanding of the means by which the method may be evaluated.
- B. To gain an understanding of the problems associated with the teaching of reading and particularly with the problems which are peculiar to our times.
- C. To gain an understanding of what is important in the teaching of reading in addition to methods. These factors include the training and capabilities of the teacher; the background, emotional make-up and intellectual capacity of the student; the socio-economic level of the community as it relates to both the student and to school facilities and a large number of other contributing but less critical factors.
- D. To gain an understanding of the specific methods used in the teaching of reading in the Minneapolis schools.
- E. To provide a corps of laymen -- the members of the Curriculum Committee -- with some insight into the problems associated with the teaching of reading. This "corps" can provide a bridge between the professional educator and the layman-parent who frequently is confused about the entire problem of reading, particularly as it relates to his own child.
- F. To publish a report of the Committee's study which will include the conclusions which have evolved.

SUMMARY

To achieve its objectives, the Committee made use of three approaches: reading and study by individual members; reports by members to the Committee; reports by outside authorities. The Committee held twenty-three meetings, all of which were well attended and characterized by vigorous discussion.

These three approaches provided the Committee members with a wealth of material from which to gain knowledge and on which to base a report. It was initially decided that the report would describe the important approaches to the teaching of reading but would not attempt to include all the possible approaches which have been suggested. Although there was keen interest in the teaching of reading in the Minneapolis school system, it was decided that the bulk of the discussion would not relate specifically to Minneapolis, but that one section of the report would be included on the Minneapolis situation.

The various portions of the report were written by individual members, and special meetings were devoted to a discussion of the objectives, the summary, the resumé and the conclusions.

ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

The Committee's first four objectives dealt with understandings concerning:

- A. Various methods used in the teaching of reading.
- B. Problems associated with reading.
- C. Other important factors mentioned in the listing of objectives.
- D. Methods used in the Minneapolis Public Schools.

We believe that we have, to some extent, attained these objectives. Following is a list of our more important understandings:

Objective A - Methods

- 1. There is no single method of teaching reading which may be described as "best".
- 2. The reading process comprises:
 - (a) Word recognition through a variety of means including phonics, total word recognition, word structure and context.
 - (b) Getting and giving meaning.
 - (c) Personal response.
 - (d) Interest and appreciation.
- 3. Many respected authorities, with sometimes divergent views on the teaching of reading, are contributing to the available knowledge about children and how they learn, about new techniques and their results and about new administrative practices.
- 4. New approaches and experimental programs are providing fresh insights about the learning process.

Objective B - Problems

- 1. Children vary widely in their experiences, abilities, emotional stability, physical health, maturity and interests.
- 2. Because of unequal home and community opportunities, standardized tests cannot give an adequate measurement of children's abilities.
- 3. In large classes, adequate attention cannot be given to individual differences.

4. There are too few psychologists and psychiatrists available for early diagnosis of children's difficulties.
5. Few schools have remedial classes. Only the most seriously retarded in reading attend these and frequently at some distance from their home school. Diagnosis of reading difficulties is frequently delayed unduly.
6. School library and classroom collections are inadequately supplied with the variety and quality of material needed to supplement and enrich classroom instruction for every reading level.
7. Textbooks are frequently not geared to the needs of children.
8. Many teachers are not adequately prepared by teacher-training institutions and in-service courses for the teaching of reading.

Objective C - Other Factors

1. The teacher is the most influential factor in the child's success or failure.
2. Good curriculum materials and teaching guides are of vital importance.
3. The quality, variety and supply of reading materials influence motivation, understanding, learning, reading habits and continuing interest in reading.
4. Reading is a skill, the development of which should be the concern of teachers in all content areas.

Objective D - The Minneapolis Public Schools

Since the understandings listed above relate in general to all school systems, no additional statement is necessary here. One section of the report is devoted to the teaching of reading in the Minneapolis Public Schools.

Objective E

To provide a corps of laymen with some insight into the problems associated with the teaching of reading, which can serve as a bridge between the professional educator and the layman-parent.

This objective we have, to some extent, achieved through the publication of this report.

A RESUME OF THE REPORT

The above statement of objectives points out that reading is the mechanical decoding of letters or letter combinations into the words they represent, coupled with understanding and the less tangible factors of insight, creativity, pleasure and self-development. Basic to reading, it goes without saying, is the technical aspect of word recognition or word decoding. If the decoding is accomplished by "sounding out" each letter or letter combination, the technique involved is termed phonics. If, on the other hand, the decoding is accomplished by recognition of the entire word, the technique has been termed trivially "look-say" or more properly whole word recognition. Word structure and context make important contributions to both of these decoding procedures.

The popular press has long referred to decoding by phonics and by whole word recognition as "methods" for the teaching of reading. More accurately, they comprise that portion of the method which relates to the decoding of words. Educators hasten to add that no method for the teaching of reading makes use of either technique exclusively. A method based primarily on phonics must necessarily make use of word recognition for translation of words like "thought". Correspondingly, the most avid supporters of whole word recognition agree that "disestablishmentarianism" is best converted from its print symbol into its oral counterpart by "sounding out". And a student may quickly realize that both techniques are valuable when he is confronted with the word, "cataphoresis".

The terminology is complicated by the fact that the technical literature does indeed refer to a phonic method for the initial teaching of reading. Although this method relies to a large extent on "sounding out" for that portion of it dealing with print symbol decoding, its proponents certainly do not exclude whole word recognition. The method for the teaching of reading which relies to a large degree on whole word recognition for the translation process is the one which makes use of modern basal readers and accompanying materials. This method is frequently termed, for the sake of convenience, the basal method. Such terminology, however, is inaccurate since the term, basal, refers simply to a correlated series of textbooks and teaching aids rather than to a method for teaching. The basal texts, widely used in the elementary grades of the Minneapolis public schools, rely heavily on whole word recognition, although they are sufficiently flexible so that phonics may also be introduced.

The Committee, accordingly, has examined the phonic and whole word recognition methods for the teaching of reading. It has also examined the initial teaching alphabet approach which is basically phonic, the language experience approach which involves primarily although not exclusively whole word recognition, the linguistic

approach which is primarily phonic, the individualized approach which is eclectic, and programmed learning which is largely a phonic approach.

Every educator stresses the importance of the frustrating problem of individual differences among children. Our Committee examined this critical phase of the teaching of reading by way of a series of topics on the disadvantaged child, the gifted child, reading readiness, parent readiness and remedial reading. The latter subject was examined primarily as it relates to the Minneapolis situation. Most educators agree that the individual differences of a child lead to a greater disparity in performance than do differences in the teaching approaches. Closely related and equally important is the teacher's capabilities to meet the needs of the child. Important research on these factors is under way and is described in Dr. Bond's lecture, reproduced in Appendix B.

Teacher training, both pre-service and in-service, is an important aspect of this problem. It is one, however, that lends itself to very little analysis by a committee. Thus, we can only recognize the problem and call attention to its critical nature.

Very important is the question of how reading is taught in the Minneapolis Public School System. The Committee devoted several sessions to this important problem, the results of which are summarized in a major section of this report.

Finally, included in the appendices of this report are summaries of talks by three authorities on the teaching of reading, Dr. Guy Bond, Dr. Theodore Clymer and Miss Mildred Carlson. Their remarks captured the spirit of the Committee's need so well that it was felt important to include the details of their comments.

Highlights of the report follow. It is important to point out that the individual sections represent primarily the thinking of their authors. The sections of the report entitled Objectives, Summary, Resumé, and Conclusions represent a consensus of thinking of the entire Committee.

THE PHONIC METHOD

Phonetics is the science of speech sounds and the symbols by which they are shown in writing and printing. All methods for teaching reading involve the use of phonics, that is, the association of letters or combinations of letters with their appropriate speech sounds. The various methods for teaching reading differ in how and when phonics is taught. Phonics may be taught synthetically or analytically:

Synthetic Approach (Phonic Method)

1. The child learns the sounds of individual letters and letter combinations usually before he learns to read.
2. When the child meets an unfamiliar word, he synthesizes, or sounds out, the sounds that make up the word.

Analytic Approach (Word Recognition Method)

1. The child develops a vocabulary of words he knows by sight. He does this while learning to read.
2. The child eventually analyzes the words for their sounds.

Proponents of the phonic method point out that the ability to "sound out" a word gives the child tremendous power. The number of words he knows is not limited by his ability to recognize them. Once he achieves the skill of sounding out words, he very soon substitutes word recognition of his own accord. Advocates of the phonic method feel that use of this method helps the child become an independent reader sooner and that his reading comprehension certainly is improved when he is able to recognize new words readily. There is also evidence to suggest that use of the phonic method tends to improve spelling.

The adversaries of phonics, on the other hand, point out that English is only 85 per cent phonetic and that many of the common Anglo-Saxon words are highly irregular. Thus, most phonetic generalizations work less than half the time. They also believe that the whole word recognition method fosters greater comprehension than the phonic method.

THE TEACHING OF READING THROUGH THE USE OF BASAL READERS

As indicated above, the popular press tends to equate the "look-say" or whole word recognition method for the teaching of reading with the use of basal readers. Actually, basal readers are simply a correlated, graded series of textbooks which may encompass any system for teaching reading. With many modern basal texts, however, such as those used in the Minneapolis Public School system, the teaching starts with "sight words" which become the basis for the development of reading skills according to the child's capabilities.

The primary objective of this basal reading approach is to stimulate the child's interest, to teach him to think critically and to develop broad understanding.

Opponents of the system, which relies heavily on whole word recognition in the initial teaching experience, point out that many children subjected to it have not learned to read properly. Proponents of the system point out that this is not the fault of the system; it is the inability of the child himself who would have difficulty learning to read under any system. The problem has become more severe as school populations have increased.

THE LINGUISTIC APPROACH

Linguistics, a philosophy applied to all phases of communications, places heavy emphasis on the nature, utility and functioning of language. When applied to reading, it attempts to introduce the concept of function at a very early stage. Thus, the child is taught about sentence structure, paragraph structure and intonation, while at the same time he is taught reading, utilizing primarily the phonic approach.

THE INITIAL TEACHING ALPHABET APPROACH

This interesting approach expands the English alphabet to 44 characters and assigns a specific and unique sound to each one of these. This alphabet overcomes one of the important arguments against the validity of the phonic method for teaching reading -- namely, that our language is not completely phonetic and that many letters have several sounds. After the child learns to read using the initial teaching alphabet, he is introduced to the regular alphabet. At this time word recognition is introduced.

The proponents of the system point with pride to the speed with which children learn to read. The opponents of the system point out that the initial teaching alphabet approach, like the phonic method, does not foster understanding because of its emphasis on mechanics. Proponents state that it produces free, self-expressive children who can write creatively at an early age. There is also concern about whether the transition from the initial teaching alphabet to the regular alphabet can be accomplished without a setback in the child's ability to read.

THE LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH

This approach recognizes and capitalizes on the inter-relationship of all the communication skills -- speaking, listening-viewing, reading and writing. The children literally write their own textbooks by recounting their own experiences. Before the boys and

girls are able to write independently, the teacher records these experiences as they are dictated by the children. A reading vocabulary is built, largely by whole word recognition, as children make the connection between spoken and written language. Since words have individual and personal connotation, they are learned rapidly.

This method places great demands on the teacher and is most successful if class size is small.

THE PROGRAMMED READING APPROACH

Basic to programmed reading is a concept found in all programmed learning -- namely, that the learner has access to answers so that he can check his own results. Only after he has learned a given fact does he tackle the next one. Thus, the method places strong emphasis on reading readiness. Phonics are involved primarily; accordingly, the vocabulary words have a high degree of phonetic regularity. At the same time, they are words that are meaningful to children.

Basically, then, this system is a combination of the phonic method with the so-called programmed approach to learning. The important point in the programming of learning is that the student does not go on to step two until he has satisfied both himself and his teacher that he has mastered the material in step one. This means, of course, that students must work independently. For this reason, the contribution of the teacher who must check the child's progress assumes great importance.

THE INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH

The individualized approach, like the programmed approach, makes little attempt to teach the child in a group. Rather, the child is allowed to advance at his own pace without the censure or the pressure of the group. Both the basal readers and the various phonic methods are utilized. It is the important task of the teacher to analyze a child's needs so that he may be given the type of material which best satisfies these needs. The individualized approach to the teaching of reading places important emphasis on the role of the teacher as well as on the need for a large variety of materials.

READING READINESS

No method for the teaching of reading is effective unless the child is ready to learn to read. There are many factors involved in

developing a readiness for reading, some of which include the child's inherent intelligence, his emotional make-up, his home environment and his experiences, as well as his motor, perceptual and linguistic development. The positive aspects of these factors combined with the careful guiding hand of a kindergarten teacher can prepare a child for formal reading experience in the first grade.

It is an interesting point that reading readiness does not stop once the child starts to learn to read. Reading readiness is a continuing function throughout the grades, intended to prepare the child for continually greater achievements in the reading area.

PARENT READINESS

An interesting concept relative to the ability of the child to learn to read is the contribution which the parent makes to the child's readiness. This may be called "Parent Readiness" and involves the parent's contribution to the child's emotional and physical health and to experiences which encourage the child to read.

THE DISADVANTAGED CHILD

A child may be disadvantaged because of physical disability, mental retardation, emotional disturbance or simply because his cultural experiences are not on a par with those of his classmates.

There is no one best way to teach reading to disadvantaged children. In this respect disadvantaged children differ little from the general group in that one way of teaching reading is not adequate for all its members. The problem is frequently amplified, however, for the disadvantaged child because of his different pace or style of learning or, in certain instances, because of his lesser ability to learn. Accordingly, a critical factor for the disadvantaged child is the teacher, who must have sufficient training and perception to determine what the child's needs are and to choose an approach to the teaching of reading which will allow him to achieve within his own frame of reference.

Critical also in the teaching of the disadvantaged child is the need to diagnose his problem very early before he piles one failure upon the other. Each time he fails the learning of reading becomes more difficult. Early diagnosis and individual treatment lead to a better adjusted, happier child who will, in all likelihood, learn to read at least to some extent.

DYSLEXIA -- READING DISABILITY WITH NEUROLOGICAL INVOLVEMENT*

A special type of disadvantaged child is one whose reading disability results from neurological dysfunction of the central nervous system. This problem, termed dyslexia, has been recognized only recently, and knowledge about it is not widely disseminated.

Identification of this handicap is often difficult because it has no single set of "telltale" symptoms nor gross evidence of neurological defects such as that found in disorders of the peripheral nervous system. Significant clues are available for clinical diagnosis, however, in the young dyslexic child whose perceptual, linguistic, motor, and/or social skills often exhibit developmental retardations. During the pre-school and early school years, these children often appear "immature". Awkwardness, hyperactivity, poor left-right discrimination, left-handedness and a history of delayed or erratic speech development are frequent symptoms in these children who are usually boys.

Their reading symptoms characteristically show a high degree of reversals, omissions, translocations and condensations of letters or sounds in their words which persist well beyond the normal period when beginning readers make these errors.

It is not a static condition; many of the "immaturities" are overcome or compensated with increasing age, but valuable diagnostic clues are available in many cases in the child's "ugly" handwriting, poor language expression and bizarre spelling, especially in work written to dictation rather than in a spelling test.

Quite naturally, prolonged frustration in an area so vital to the self-concept of a school-age child leads to emotional problems. Unfortunately, these often become so predominant in the older child that the primary cause, dyslexia, is completely overlooked. Thus, treatment, as close to first grade as possible, is considered essential by authorities in order to avoid emotional involvement, inaccurate diagnosis and the limitations on intellectual growth caused by poor reading ability. In addition, there is increasing evidence that better results are achieved more easily with younger children.

Correct diagnosis of the problem is a crucial first step for obtaining the special techniques of teaching that are adapted to

*A detailed report on dyslexia has been written by Mrs. Kathryn B. Gehring. Because Mrs. Gehring's presentation is so extensive and so technical in nature, it is not included in the body of this report. It is, however, available on request as a special report to anyone who is interested.

specific, individual needs of dyslexic children. Thus, they need intensive training in the decoding mechanics in order to establish correct sound-symbol relationships. Most remediation which is successful with dyslexics includes:

1. Initial use of the multisensory approach which relies on the concurrent activities of seeing, hearing, speaking and writing as a means of involving as many sensory pathways of learning as possible.
2. Improved sensory discrimination through exaggerated perceptual cues such as color, "selective listening" or tracing of large letters.
3. Learning by generalizations such as pronunciation rules, rather than learning by rote memory since ability to recognize visual-auditory relationships spontaneously is poor.
4. A supportive relationship with an understanding teacher.

In addition, an increasing number of specialists believe that preventive "educational therapy" for the pre-school child with developmental retardations (symptoms related to reading difficulties) is the most effective attack on the whole problem of reading retardation.

Prospects for overcoming the educational handicaps of dyslexia are not good in most school systems at the present time. Comprehensive diagnostic testing by psychologists, doctors (including neurologists) and reading specialists is not generally available and is usually delayed because of school policies related to remedial reading. (The majority of children with reading problems are not referred for study until they are being considered for remedial reading classes.) Often these children are not tested until at least the latter part of the third grade. Even in those schools which are fortunate enough to have good diagnostic facilities, the successful translation of information about specific deficiencies into appropriate instructional techniques is dependent on the number of trained specialists in reading, an adequate supply of materials for a wide range of teaching techniques and the policies of admission to remedial reading classes. There are never enough openings for those who could profit from remedial help.

The most basic educational problem associated with dyslexia is the necessity for a vast amount of additional research so that accurate "educational prescriptions" can become possible. Then, hopefully, trial-and-error teaching will not be necessary to determine which method, which sensory pathways of learning, which exaggerated perceptual cues should be used with an individual child.

REMEDIAL READING IN THE MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Because the subject of remedial reading is such a broad one, it was decided to study it primarily in relationship to the Minneapolis Public School system.

Remedial reading instruction in the Minneapolis Public Schools is available after the second or third grade for poor readers whose IQ scores are above 90. These intelligence scores are obtained primarily from group tests which are known to penalize poor readers. Children with the greatest learning potential are necessarily given priority because of a shortage of remedial classes.

Reading centers are located throughout the Minneapolis elementary schools so that each center services four to six adjoining elementary school districts. For this reason, some children have transportation problems despite the school's policy of furnishing bus tokens for those who need them.

Administration figures for an average Minneapolis junior high school indicate that 20 per cent of the entering seventh grade students with IQ's above 90 are retarded in reading to the extent of two or more years. At the seventh grade level special training is available for many of these students. The special reading classes are usually substituted for English; less frequently for social sciences, art or science. There appears to be a desire on the part of remedial reading teachers to attack the problem prior to the seventh grade.

Minneapolis is particularly fortunate to have a well-designed program for children with unusual learning disabilities. This program provides small classes, individual tutoring, home-bound instruction and tutoring for certain psychiatric institutions and hospitals. The program makes use of resource teachers, individual tutors, school social workers, school psychologists and special teachers who are trained to work with children with learning disabilities. Most of these children are referred for testing, interestingly enough, because of reading problems. There is a need for expanded testing.

THE GIFTED CHILD

The gifted child is practically always characterized by high level reading ability. This presents to the school an important obligation of making sure that the gifted child's capabilities are utilized to the greatest possible extent. One approach is to enrich the curriculum in the classroom. A second approach is to provide special classes for gifted children. The advantages and disadvantages of these approaches are discussed in the report. It is an interesting point that the individualized reading approach can be especially useful for gifted children.

Certain problems may be associated with the gifted child such as his overdependence on memorization as a substitute for the mastery of reading skills. The gifted child may have difficulty, strangely enough, in developing good reading comprehension. Thus, there are some gifted children whose emotional or physical problems prevent them from achieving. These children usually respond rapidly to remedial help.

The premium placed on high-level achievement in the modern world has provided the school with an unusually critical challenge to develop to the fullest the capabilities of the gifted child.

THE READING PROGRAM IN THE MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In the Minneapolis Public Schools, the teacher may select the plan which she feels will best meet the needs of the learner. The most widely used approach, however, is the one employing the basal reader. Other approaches found in the Minneapolis system include language experience and self-selection or individualized methods. A teacher may combine methods and approaches and use several during a school year. Words-in-color, the multilevel instruction program of Science Research Association Laboratories and programmed materials are being used experimentally in several schools.

The initial approach to the teaching of reading is through the children's own recorded experiences. The children thus learn to recognize many words before their introduction to readers. Instruction in phonics is gradual and continuous through the elementary grades. Other means of word recognition are also taught. The program is planned to develop comprehension, study skills, literary appreciation and personal interest.

To guide teachers, whatever approach may be used, extensive curriculum materials are published, outlining principles, psychological characteristics of children, effects of variations in background and ability and specific skills and understandings to be developed. Illustrative lessons are included to assist the teacher in her planning.

CONCLUSIONS

RELATIVE TO THE SCHOOL:

The Committee heartily endorses the impressive research programs under way on the problems associated with reading.

The Committee feels that continuing emphasis, in Minneapolis as well as nationally, should be placed on experimental plans which are carefully conceived, supervised and evaluated.

The Committee's study has indicated that there is a large number of students who do not learn to read satisfactorily and who require remedial instruction. In the meetings of the Committee this point was raised more often than any other single subject. The Committee feels that reading instruction would be more satisfactory if sufficient funds were available to provide for:

- A. The expansion of services for early diagnosis and treatment of reading difficulties. Careful examination should be made of existing testing techniques and timing of the administration of tests. The Committee was particularly concerned about IQ tests, the results of which seem to depend at present to a large degree on the child's ability to read.
- B. Remedial centers or remedial reading facilities at all schools.
- C. Smaller classes.
- D. Expanded library facilities in all schools.
- E. Tuition-free summer schools for all children who can benefit from them.
- F. In-service programs for all teachers, including closed-circuit T.V. training programs.
- G. Financial aid to teachers for study.
- H. More resource teachers at all grade levels including senior high schools.
- I. Teacher aides for assistance with routine procedures.

RELATIVE TO THE LAYMAN:

The members of this Curriculum Committee, as well as other interested individuals, can help to bridge the gap between professional educators and laymen by:

- A. Reading a variety of books and articles on the teaching of reading.
- B. Attending and helping plan P.T.A. and Citizens Committee on Public Education meetings which deal with the subject.

The Committee feels that in order to bridge the gap between educators and laymen, school systems should make available to parents and other laymen materials to aid understanding, possibly in the form of summaries of curriculum guides. Such a summary entitled "The Reading Program in the Elementary Grades of the Minneapolis Public Schools" is included in this report (see p. 95).

RELATIVE TO THE PARENT:

The Committee believes that the home can make a valuable contribution to the child's progress. Each parent should consider seriously his role in the child's success in learning to read. The parent, it goes without saying, must become as knowledgeable as possible about the modern methods for the teaching of reading and the problems associated with them. At the same time he must recognize the responsibility of the educator for delineating the reading program.

RELATIVE TO THE TEACHER:

This Committee, although greatly interested in teacher training, did not have time to study this subject. We suggest that teacher training may be an appropriate subject for another study committee.

IN 1884 AN EDUCATOR WROTE:

"Teach beginners by a judicious combination of the word method, phonic method, and spelling method. After learning to call a limited number of words at sight, the methods practically run together, and the difference is too little apparent that no one method need be made a hobby of."

John Swett, Methods of Teaching. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1884, p. 123.

THE "PHONIC-FIRST" METHOD FOR THE TEACHING OF READING

by

Mrs. Arnold E. Anderson

THE "PHONETIC-FIRST"* METHOD FOR THE TEACHING OF READING

Mrs. Arnold E. Anderson

Phonetics is the science of speech sounds and the symbols by which they are shown in writing and printing. Since the first step in any method of teaching reading is perception, a student must:

1. learn to differentiate one written symbol from another.
2. learn to pronounce these symbols.
3. learn the meaning of these symbols.

Every spoken language is a phonetic one. The Phonetic Ideal would be a language in which every spoken sound is represented by one letter and only one. Only Spanish and Italian approach this ideal. Most experts consider the English language to be 85% phonetic.

All methods of teaching reading involve the use of phonics -- the association of letters or combinations of letters with their appropriate speech sounds. Phonics also includes understanding of the principles that govern the use of letters in words.

I. THE METHOD

A total program of phonetic instruction would include the following:

- A. Letters of the Alphabet -- teach child to recognize the letters of the alphabet (both upper and lower cases).
- B. Consonants -- teach child the sounds of 15 Easy Consonants (b,d,f,h,j,k,l,m,n,p,r,s,t,v).
- C. Digraphs -- these are groups of two vowels or of two consonants which represent a single speech sound (ea in head; th in bath).

-- four digraphs very useful for beginning readers are: ch, sh, wh, and th. It is important that children learn these digraphs as single sounds not as a combination of letters that can be sounded out separately.

*The term "Phonetics-first" is intended to recognize the fact that phonetics, per se, cannot comprise the sole technique for the teaching of reading. Rather, where phonics are emphasized, the child will be introduced to "phonetics-first".

- D. Blends -- these are common combinations of consonants often seen together at the beginning of a word, in twos or threes. They can be taken apart and each letter sounded separately; thus they are not digraphs. Knowledge of the following blends is useful.

gr	fl	gl	pr	fr	tr
bl	br	sp	st	spr	str

- E. Vowel Sounds -- teach child the short and long sounds of the vowels (a, e, i, o, and u).

-- teach child that the letter y is sometimes used as a vowel.

-- teach child the importance of vowels. Every word in our language must contain at least one vowel.

- F. Phonograms -- these are combinations of a vowel with 1 or 2 (or in a few cases even 3) consonants. There are about 100 common phonograms.

-- it is helpful to teach the child to recognize these phonograms automatically. It reduces the time spent in sounding-out letter by letter. The following phonograms occur very frequently:

Short Vowel Phonograms

an	en	on
it	ed	ip
in	up	et
at	ig	og
ut	ab	ill
un	od	ell
id	op	ot
ag	ug	ap
ing	ick	est
ang	ack	end
ung	ock	ond
ong	ust	and
inch	anch	ench

Long Vowel Phonograms

ate	ake	ite
ear	ine	oar
ile	air	ote
ape	eel	ade
ay	eal	ope
eat	eep	oat
eet	eap	aid
ape	ike	eed
ode	ide	ead
eak	ipe	ude
ace	ane	ame
ice	ain	aim
ean	ire	eem
een	age	eam
ale	uge	une

Note: The order in which the first six elements in a program of phonetic instruction are listed does not necessarily mean that these elements are taught in that order. For instance, some systems emphasize teaching vowel sounds first.

More advanced phonetic instructions would include the following:

- G. Diphthongs -- these are speech sounds that change continuously from one vowel to another in the same syllable, often distinguished as:
1. Proper or Full Diphthong (oi in oil, ou in out, or i in ice).
 2. Imperfect or Partial Diphthong (as English o = pure o + oo).
- H. Study of Structural Analysis -- prefixes, suffixes, root words
-- syllabication
-- contractions
-- hyphenated words
-- compound words
- I. Use of Dictionary -- diacritical marks
-- pronunciation aids

II. GOOD POINTS OF THE SYNTHETIC OR "PHONETICS-FIRST" METHOD

- A. This method encourages independence. With the Basal Method the child is dependent on the teacher too long.
- B. Phonics is one of several keys to aid the child to "unlock" new words. Children should be given all the keys to word recognition from the very beginning.
- C. Teaching of phonetics, from the start, encourages correct pronunciation, improves oral reading, and develops habits of close attention to words and word parts which have a favorable effect on spelling.

Discussion of Good Points of "Phonetics-First" Method

Points A. and C. encourage early independence of the reader and improve his basic skills.

The chief advantage of the "Phonetics-First" Method is that it encourages and aids the child to become an independent reader much earlier. For example, if a child knows the 15 Easy Consonants, a few digraphs, and the one hundred Common Phonograms, it is possible for him to read, write, and spell over seven hundred words without memorizing them. Contrast this with a Basal Reading Program that has a goal of teaching a child about 300 sight words by the end of the first year. The "Phonetics-First" Method encourages the child to think, not to guess. A phonetic clue to word recognition is specific, whereas context, configuration, and picture clues are not. Using picture or context clues the word daddy could be read father. If a child is taught to remember the word monkey by a configuration clue (notice the tail on the end

of the word and relate tail to monkey) he can just as easily identify the word as donkey.

Relative to point B. children will read better when they have all the keys to "unlock" new words.

Phonics is one of several aids to word recognition. The others are context, configuration clues and picture clues, syllabication, and dictionary aids. Children will be better readers if they are given all the keys to "unlock" words from the very beginning. In the minority report of Dr. Conant's Conference of Reading Experts, Mrs. Margaret Greenman said, "The more sight words that are introduced before introducing phonics, the farther back in the program phonics is pushed. Most of the basal readers don't introduce the children to vowels until late in the second grade. They don't introduce the children to syllables, prefixed, or compound words until the second or third grade. Because the children aren't given all of the tools with which to make a phonetic analysis of a word until the third grade, they still have to memorize words by sight during the first three years."

III. CRITICISM OF THE SYNTHETIC OR "PHONETICS-FIRST" METHOD

A. English is a relatively non-phonetic language.

1. Irregularities in the language cause problems for beginning readers.
2. Phonetic generalizations work less than one-half the time.
3. Phonetic generalizations are not "useful" in relation to words contained in basal readers currently in use in primary grades.

B. Comprehension is sacrificed because attention is directed to form rather than meaning.

1. Naming letters does not help the learner to read.
2. Words, not letters, are the basic units of language.
3. Letters are abstract and words are not; therefore, a child should learn sight words first.

Note: Both methods are criticized in terms of speed, controlled vocabulary, and amount of drill involved.

Discussion of Criticism of "Phonetics-First" Method

Point A. Phonetic Irregularities -- Effectiveness of "Phonetics-First" Method.

Admittedly, the English language is only 85% phonetic and phonetic generalizations work only about half the time. Proponents of phonics feel that the Basal Method overemphasizes this problem. Unfortunately, the common Anglo-Saxon words most used in everyday speech are among the most phonetically difficult and inconsistent in the language. Basal readers draw their vocabulary from the everyday speech of children and therefore contain many of the phonetically difficult words. For instance, note the confusion in sounds and spellings of the letter o, alone or with other vowels, in the following list of words taken from the primer in a well-known series of basal readers: oh, go, look, down, come, for, who, you, not, mother, yellow, one, two, work, boat, house, too, four, home, toys. The letter o alone, in the list given, has seven different sounds (ō, ö, oo, ô, õ, ü, and û), and in the combination with other vowels has three more (oo, ou, oi). Of these sounds, all except the short sound, as in not, are spelled more than one way. For example, the long sound of o is spelled five different ways: oh as in the word oh, o as in go, ow as in yellow, oa as in boat, and o - e in home.

Noting these difficulties, one can see why advocates of basal reading series have continued to insist that words must be learned by sight first, before phonics is introduced. They have advised teachers to teach whole words first, and they have advised them not to teach the alphabet, isolated vowels, phonograms, or even initial consonants. Almost all the new approaches to the teaching of reading attempt to deal with this problem (ITA, Words by Color, Linguistic, etc.). Mrs. Cyrilla Schimschock (head of the Schimschock Tutoring School) told a CCPE Curriculum Committee that she thinks the problem of phonetic generalizations is overemphasized. She said that the majority of children she has tutored adjust very easily when a new word does not conform to the expected phonetic rule. For instance, she tells them, "If the long i sound doesn't work, try the short i sound." They do this very readily.

Points B. Comprehension sacrificed -- Alphabetical Approach does not stress meaning of words.

Basal readers, by their very nature, are limited in intellectual challenge. The oral language of children is far ahead of the language used in basal readers. To force them to work in basal readers for the first three years limits them to material below their intellectual capacity. Dr. Durrell says, "The basal reader is a tool for uniform instruction, aimed at the average child. We still have too many schools in which the basal reading program of 'twenty minutes in the reading circle, forty minutes in the workbook' is the sole diet offered."

Children come to school with a speaking vocabulary variously estimated at between five and ten thousand words. They already know how to pronounce these words and know their meaning. Vocabulary is the most important factor in comprehension. It is the teacher's task to teach children to recognize these words in their printed form. Given all the keys to "unlock" words from the beginning, children need not be restricted to controlled vocabulary material. They can proceed independently at a much faster pace.

Comprehension certainly is improved when new words are readily recognized. Knowing phonetic skills will help the child do just that. As a child progresses in reading ability, he uses phonetic skills without conscious effort; he doesn't continue to sound out each word.

It has been pointed out that people who read rapidly and with understanding rarely use phonics at all. Dr. Paul Woodring, Consultant, Ford Foundation for the Advancement of Education, thinks the answer is that phonetics is more important during the learning of a language than after the language is learned. He states, "A fast and experienced reader uses phonics only when he encounters unfamiliar words. As long as words are familiar he dashes, grasping the meaning of words, phrases, or whole paragraphs. It would only slow him up if he tried to sound out each word. But when he encounters a new word -- Tilduster, for example -- he does need a knowledge of phonics. You or I can pronounce this word even though we never saw it before. But if we did not know phonics we would be just as likely to pronounce it Arizona or Mississippi. To the small child words in print are unfamiliar and without phonics he will be at a total loss except when the teacher is looking over his shoulder to pronounce each new word for him. If he knows how to sound out words for himself, and if he already knows their meaning from having heard them spoken, his learning can proceed rapidly when the teacher is not around."

Critics of phonics would say in regard to Dr. Woodring's example word, Tilduster, that knowing how to pronounce it still does not help you to know its meaning. This is true. This is such a strange word that both children and most adults would have to consult the dictionary to learn its meaning. However, most words encountered by elementary school children are already in their speaking vocabulary. Meaning of difficult words in the content areas (scientific terms, etc.) would have to be emphasized in order to improve comprehension of the material being read.

IV. RELATIONSHIP OF PHONICS TO OTHER METHODS

Phonics is used in all methods of teaching reading. Therefore, the basic question for our concern is how and when it is taught and how much emphasis is placed on phonics. Phonics can be utilized synthetically or analytically:

Synthetic Approach -- the child learns the sounds of individual letters and letter combinations usually before he learns to read.

-- when the child meets an unfamiliar word, he synthesizes, or "sounds out", the sounds that make up the word.

Analytic Approach -- the child develops a vocabulary of words he knows by sight. He does this while learning to read.

-- the child eventually analyzes the words for their sounds.

The analytic approach has been favored by reading experts in the United States for the past thirty to thirty-five years. It is the basis for the Basal Reading Method (sight or "look-say"), the method most widely used in the Minneapolis Public Schools. Children are first taught a sight vocabulary and are encouraged to use context clues, picture clues, and configuration (recognizable word parts or structure) clues to recognize new words. Phonetic training is usually introduced during the latter half of the first grade. This statement from Dr. Guy Bond's book, Teaching the Child to Read, illustrates the type of instructions given to teachers: "In developing phonetic ability the teacher should be concerned with only those sound elements which are in the words comprising the basal vocabulary. Only the most frequently needed and therefore most useful phonetic elements should be developed". With the Basal Method, work on consonants and beginning sounds is emphasized in second grade and work on vowel sounds in third grade. Structural analysis -- root words, prefixes, suffixes, compound words, possessives, plurals, contractions, syllabication -- is gradually introduced in second and third grade. Much dictionary work is probably not done until the fourth grade.

Since the publication of Why Johnny Can't Read in 1955, there has been much criticism and controversy concerning the teaching of reading in the United States. The Analytical or Basal Method has been replaced in many school systems by the Synthetic or "Phonetics-First" Method. With the exception of the Language-Experience Method, all other methods or systems of reading instructions developed during the last ten years recognize as basic the Synthetic or "Phonetics-First" approach to the teaching of reading. The most widely used of these new methods are the following:

- A. ITA--Initial Teaching Alphabet -- an alphabet consisting of 44 characters which approach the ideal of a one-to-one correspondence between sound and symbol. (See page 20)
- B. Words in Color -- 47 colors correspond to 47 sounds in our language.
- C. Programmed Learning -- the Sullivan Programmed Reading material is a good example of this method. The material is produced on 15 different levels so that a child can move through these levels at his own rate and compete only with himself. These materials emphasize phonics -- 2 vowels and 6 consonants are taught in the first two books. (See page 43)
- D. Linguistic Approach -- children are first taught to distinguish print symbols.
 - next, regularly spelled words are introduced -- fat, cat, bat, etc.
 - then, irregularly spelled words are introduced. (See page 17)
- E. Phono-Visual -- this is a multi-sensory approach, and phonetics is taught from the beginning.

V. EVALUATION OF SYNTHETIC OR "PHONETICS-FIRST" METHOD IN COMPARISON WITH THE ANALYTIC OR BASAL METHOD

Dr. Donald Durrell, nationally-known reading expert and chairman of the National Study of First-Grade Reading sponsored by the U. S. Office of Education, states the case for the "Phonetics-First" Method of teaching reading in the September, 1964, issue of Atlantic Monthly. Dr. Durrell thinks that the most significant element in the teaching of reading involves teaching students the names of the letters of the alphabet and then making them aware of the separate sounds in the words they hear and speak. He feels that children will learn to read better, whatever materials are used for instruction, if they first know the letter names and word sounds. He says, "Since all letter names, except h and w, contain their letter names plus an extraneous vowel, children who know letter names have only a short step to letter sounds." Dr. Durrell realizes that some children have extreme difficulty in distinguishing sounds. These children should have special ear-training in addition to regular phonetic instruction.

Discussion of Criticism of Both Methods

As has been previously stated, both the "Phonetics-First" Method and the Basal Method have been criticized in terms of speed, controlled vocabulary, and the amount of drill involved.

A. Speed

1. Children may actually learn to read sooner by the Basal Method, but the number of words recognized is limited.
2. Knowledge of phonetic skills taught first may slow the process of reading whole words at the start of instruction, but once these skills are learned they enable the child to catch up and surpass the reading vocabulary of children who are taught by the Basal Method.

B. Controlled Vocabulary

1. Basal readers have a carefully controlled vocabulary introducing about 300 new sight words each year.
2. "Phonetics-First" materials may emphasize phonetically regular words at first -- bat, hat, cat, etc. But children proceed to work with a much larger vocabulary as soon as some phonetic skills are learned.

C. Drill

1. Any method of instruction involves drill or practice in the mechanics of that method.
2. With the Basal Method drill is centered on sight work recognition.
3. With the "Phonetics-First" Method drill would be concentrated on letter names and sounds, phonograms, digraphs, and blends.

VI. IN MY OPINION --

...phonetics should not be considered in isolation but as one part of a total program of reading instruction. I feel, as I suspect the above discussion indicates, that phonetics should be taught from the very beginning in all methods of reading instruction. I am encouraged by the many new approaches to the teaching of reading that emphasize phonics-first (ITA, Linguistic, Words by Color, Programmed Materials, Phono-Visual, etc.). Phonetics is taught in Remedial Reading Clinics. I think if we teach "Phonetics-First" in all reading programs, we can reduce the number of children who need remedial help.

I agree with Dr. Guy Bond that the skills of a teacher in analyzing and diagnosing individual student's problems and her skill in adapting methods to solve these problems is more important than any single method of teaching reading. Therefore, I think we should be particularly concerned about the amount and type of instruction given students in our colleges of education and the "in-service" instruction they receive while they are teaching. Many primary grade teachers have not had training in teaching phonetic skills or in diagnosing reading difficulties. The employment of more reading specialists to work at the primary level would help solve this problem. It is my primary concern that children with reading difficulties be identified very early in their school life and be given help immediately. The sooner non-readers are identified and helped the less remedial instruction will be needed.

Following is my personal evaluation of the tests currently in use.

1. Intelligence Tests -- Unless given orally, these tests do not indicate the true ability of a child with a reading problem.
2. Achievement Tests -- The Iowa Achievement Tests are used in Minneapolis Schools. As a child progresses in school he must read well to rate well in these tests. Despite this fact, the bulletin Elementary Reading Program, Minneapolis Public Schools, September, 1963, says specifically that scores on different achievement tests may not be used to make comparisons. I think comparisons of scores of these tests given in second, fourth, and sixth grades would help identify children with reading difficulties.
3. Informal Reading Inventories -- These tests are based on material of known difficulty most commonly from a carefully graded series of basal readers. I feel tests based on unfamiliar material would prove more indicative of a child's true reading ability.
4. Standardized Tests -- These tests tend to overrate the reading grade level of students. For example, recent research by John Emerson Daniel indicates that Gates' Standardized Tests overrate students by two full years. If children learn to read from basal readers written by Dr. Gates and then are tested on material obtained in these readers, it seems quite obvious to me that they will rate higher than they would on tests containing unfamiliar material. Perhaps use of these tests has been one of the primary factors that has encouraged educators to continue to say, "Children are learning to read well."

References relating to overestimation of reading ability by standardized tests include: John Emerson Daniel, Elementary English, October, 1962; Gilbert Schiffman, International Reading Association Yearbook, 1963, pp. 119-122; Gus Plessas, Education, February, 1963, pp. 344-347; Emmett Betts, Foundation of Reading Instruction, American Book Company, Chapter 21.

THE TEACHING OF READING THROUGH THE USE OF BASAL READERS

by

Mrs. Marcella Mathews

THE TEACHING OF READING THROUGH THE USE OF BASAL READERS

Mrs. Marcella Mathews

The one word most descriptive of the basal reading method is comprehensive. The writers of these books are professors of education, teachers of reading, who have studied and done research on how children learn to read. Thus, each lesson developed from a story in such a reader includes a comprehensive coverage of reading skills. The use of basal readers as the mainstay to reading instruction is the approach to reading instruction most generally used in schools today, and an effective, structured reading program results.

Proponents of the use of basal readers believe that an adequate basal reading program provides the essential prerequisites for successful growth in word comprehension, interpretation and all aspects of mature reading. The skills taught in these books are brought to fruition as the child extends his reading in his personal reading and in texts in various content areas. It is the firm belief of basal reading experts that the programs they have designed afford the springboard for successful applications of reading skills in the life-long reading tasks confronting the individual.

I. THE METHOD

The primary objective in a lesson using a basal text is to stimulate children to want to read the story. Discussion of the pictures and the experiences of the children builds an anticipation of what they are to read, and prepares them for perceiving the printed words. Each lesson is carefully developed so that motivation, purpose setting and comprehension checks can proceed in an orderly way. The method stresses continuity, sequence and integration in all the phases of instructional practice.

The teacher using a basic text motivates the child by starting a lesson with introductory devices that catch his attention. The teacher develops skills in word analysis including phonics, reviews words already learned and emphasizes the meanings of words. At the proper time new words and their meanings are introduced and comprehension of the entire story is stressed. As the student progresses he is urged to think critically, and at higher grade levels the basal method encourages the development of the ability to read material of varying content with broad understanding. The basal method attempts to adjust the rate of reading to

the purpose for reading and involves a mastery of study skills such as skimming, summarizing and reviewing while developing the ability to know when to use each of these approaches in the seeking of information.

II. DISCUSSION OF THE METHOD

At the beginning of a school year at first grade level a teacher observes the children to be taught, gives reading readiness tests, informal tests and standard reading tests. Each child is watched and listened to, and carried through a reading readiness program. Soon those who are mature enough are introduced to the pre-primers from which certain sight words and characters are presented before the books are put into the hands of the children. Experience charts are developed to teach these sight words, too. The teacher begins to group the children, carrying the more able ones into the beginning of formal reading instruction, while the others are given other kinds of experiences to continue their readiness program. The teacher uses the teacher's manual which is a rich source of ideas and activities, and follows an orderly progression of teaching. At an appropriate time workbooks are introduced to supplement the teaching which is being done, and work in these books reinforces the new learnings in the primers. In addition, the teacher prepares work sheets of her own for further drill. Usually each school system has its own Guide to the Teaching of Reading, and a teacher checks the Manual accompanying the basal text with the Guide, to be certain that the children are being taught the necessary skills.

Many of the series offer charts, word cards, films and filmstrips to reinforce the teaching skills. A teacher works first of all to motivate a desire to learn to read, and an anticipation of the story to be read. An equally important responsibility is to begin auditory training, helping children hear the sounds of letters in words, and then associating the sound with the printed symbol.

At the beginning of the school year the children are grouped on the basis of reading ability. The children in each group read materials appropriate to their reading level and proceed independently of the other groups. Group membership is flexible. A child may move from one group to another if his reading needs can be better met in another group. In addition to the ability grouping, the teacher works with individuals or groups because of a need or interest. Occasionally the whole class may meet to share a reading experience.

A reading lesson using a basal text may proceed similar to the following sequence:

1. Preparation for reading

- introduce the new vocabulary and give phonetic instruction
- draw inferences about the story from the title and pictures
- set a purpose for the reading.

2. Silent reading

- locate the information
- may divide the story into small portions or may read for designated purposes.

3. Discussion and purposeful rereading

- locate specific details to answer questions
- provide for purposeful oral reading.

4. Skill building

- provide practice in word recognition techniques, including phonics
- extend comprehension and study skills
- extend and enrich vocabulary.

5. Supplementary activities (related, independent, extended)

- read additional material related to the content of the story or unit in the basal reader
- use audio-visual materials to extend understandings and concepts developed through the basal reader
- share reading experiences through dramatization, choral speaking, creative dramatics, etc.

III. GOOD POINTS OF THE METHOD

A. Provides for systematic reading instruction

- Teachers' manuals are carefully planned to direct the teaching in a sequential program of learning.

B. Provides for teaching a balanced program of reading skills, including phonics

C. Stimulates reading beyond the basic text to supplement experiences read about

- books related to common child experiences read about
- a well-rounded selection of reading experiences which includes both recreational and work-type reading, poetry and prose, factual and fictional content, informational and entertaining material.

IV. OBJECTIONS TO THE USE OF BASIC TEXTS

Content

- Some authorities feel the basal reader has been overly concerned with vocabulary control, thus sacrificing good writing style and interest
- the content could be more challenging to boys
- the content fails to stretch the child's mind by exposing him to a wider vocabulary, as well as to deeper and wider concepts. Most of the negative comments about the lack of scope are pointed to the pre-primers and their limited content.

Vocabulary Control

- The evidence of research would suggest that extreme vocabulary control is not necessary except perhaps in the very beginning stages of reading, and for those children who show very slow growth in sight vocabulary and independent work attack.

V. AN EVALUATION OF THE METHOD

"The typical series of modern basal readers is really a complete program of learning; it includes much more than just a graded series of reading materials. This program provides the framework within which the reading skills and abilities are introduced and maintained, taking into account the developmental levels of children.

Basal readers are far from a random collection of material. They are planned around centers of interest, themes or units of work. Each skill is introduced when the background of the child should be such that he can learn this skill efficiently. Each succeeding book of the series provides new skills at a slightly higher level and also provides for the maintenance of skills previously introduced."¹

1. Carrillo, Lawrence - Unit III, Teaching Reading in the Primary Grades, December 15, 1964, p. 18; Reading Institute Extension Service.

Dr. Guy Bond makes this observation about basal readers: "A basal reading program is essential for adequate reading development because it provides the teacher with a sequential organization, a gradual introduction, and a careful repetition of words, and because it both minimizes the possibility of instructional gaps or overemphases and recognizes children's maturing reading proficiencies. ----- The writers of this book consider the basal reader to be of sufficient importance to constitute the core of the reading activities."²

Refuting the objection to basic readers because of the lack of literary value, Dr. Clymer says, "The content of the basal reader is carefully selected to meet the standards of both child interest and literary quality. Except for some obvious problems at the pre-primer level where vocabulary is limited, the stories of well-designed basal series fulfill the criteria of good literature.----- The value systems and social customs portrayed in primary basal readers have been criticized as middle class and therefore not in harmony with the background many children bring to school. We may ask, 'What is wrong with middle class values? Is working diligently, helping with a family project, caring for pets, treating neighbors, friend and family with kindness and respect a poor set of values to develop?' We may also ask these critics, 'What value systems shall we substitute?'"³

Dr. Clymer goes on to say, "There are certain dangers in the use of basal reading programs: (1) Uniform application: It may be tempting for a teacher to administer a uniform program of instruction to all children regardless of need. (2) Using the text as the total program: The basic text cannot be considered the entire reading curriculum. (3) Failure to apply insight: Teachers may be hesitant to deviate from the suggestions in the manual or alter directions for workbook pages. The effective use of basal readers involves professional insight to meet special needs of children."³

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2. Bond, Guy, and Wagner, Eva Bond - Teaching the Child to Read, p. 29, 30; The MacMillan Company, New York, 1960.
 3. Clymer, Theodore, The Structured Reading Program; reprinted by permission of the author by Albert J. Harris, Readings on Reading Instruction, p. 135, David McKay Company, Inc., New York, 1963.

Perhaps most of the criticism of basal readers relates more to their improper and exclusive use than to their inadequacies. Most teachers using the basal readers would not limit the reading program to the basal reader series. These books would be supplemented with library books, periodicals, reference materials and audio-visual materials. When a teacher uses basal readers, there is no reason why a flexible plan for grouping the children cannot be used, moving children from group to group, or forming small interest groups for projects which come from reading interests. A teacher works constantly to encourage children to read widely, far beyond the day's assignment in the basal reader, at the same time building on the reading skills which had been presented in the reading lessons.

- VI. IN MY OPINION -- Basal readers are a vitally important tool of instruction. The manuals give excellent suggestions for enrichment, besides detailing carefully how to introduce basic skills. It is true that the very first pre-primer books are extremely limited in vocabulary, but the children seem to enjoy the situations in which the characters are presented. The more able readers quickly move on to reading of higher interest, and there are quantities of easy to read supplementary books a teacher can bring into the classroom, either from the school library, the Board of Education, or from the Public Library.

A teacher may use a wide variety of reading materials and approaches, planning instruction around the level at which the child is reading. In-service meetings are useful to keep teachers informed about research on the teaching of reading. Summer institutes are valuable to stimulate fresh approaches to the teaching of reading.

The Guide to the Teaching of Reading developed for use in the Minneapolis schools identifies the guide lines for our developmental reading program. Teachers use basal readers and the accompanying manuals to implement this program, at the same time accepting the responsibility of broadening the reading experiences of children beyond the materials presented in these reading books.

THE LINGUISTIC APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF READING

by

Mrs. Arnold E. Anderson

LINGUISTIC APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF READING

Mrs. Arnold E. Anderson

Charles C. Fries, Professor of English and Linguistics, Emeritus, at the University of Michigan, defines linguistic science as a body of verified and verifiable knowledge concerning the nature and functioning of human language. This knowledge is cumulative; it builds upon the past and grows constantly. Dr. Fries states that linguistics does not have a ready-made, complete, new set of teaching devices, plans, or methods to offer. What it has to offer consists primarily of: (1) a new and different approach to evaluating the language achievement of the pupils who are to be taught to read; (2) a new and different statement of the process and progress of reading achievement in terms of the language development of the pupils; (3) a new understanding of the basic relation of modern English spelling to the phonetic patterns of modern English words.

I. THE METHOD

There are three separate divisions to the linguistic approach to the teaching of reading:

- A. Reading Instruction -- teach child to distinguish print symbols.
-- teach child to read phonetically regular words first.
- B. Structural Linguistics -- teach child about sentence structure and sequences of sentences in paragraphs.
- C. Oral Language -- teach child native intonation not just pronunciation.
-- teach child use of diacritical marks from the very beginning.

II. DISCUSSION OF THE METHOD

A. Reading Instruction

1. Teach children to distinguish printed symbols.
2. Teach words that are phonetically regular first -- fat, sat, cat, etc.
3. Teach semi-regular words.
4. Teach irregular words.

B. Structural Linguistics

Dr. Fries says that even from the very beginning there should be complete meaning responses, not only to words, but to words in full sentences, and to these sentences in sequences of sentences. To accomplish this understanding, children are taught word order and sentence structure. The primary law of English grammar is word order. Where a word is placed in a sentence helps determine its meaning. For example:

The stone hurt her foot.
The boys will stone the garbage can.
His silence is like a stone wall.

The smelt run occurs in April every year.
That horse will run in the race.
She has a run in her stocking.
He had a run of bad luck.
He caught the ball on the run.

Children are also taught rules in regard to specific words. For instance, the word the is called a determiner. It must always be followed by a noun. This fact is always true in our language, so a child can be taught that this is a rule or law of the language.

C. Oral Language

Children are given insight into relationships between our written and spoken language. They are taught native intonation not just pronunciation. To accomplish this diacritical marks are taught from the very beginning. When students write words, for example, they put in the proper marks that indicate whether a vowel has a short or long sound.

Children are taught that punctuation carries meaning. The punctuation of writing symbolizes, though imperfectly, the intonation, or tone of voice of speech. Intonation is made up of three features called stress, pitch, and juncture:

Stress is a matter of the loudness or softness with which syllables are uttered.

Pitch is melody. There are four pitch contrasts: low, next to low, next to high, and high.

Juncture is the breaking off or interrupting of the speech according to the structure of the sentence. Juncture involves a lengthening out of a final syllable plus possible alterations to the pitch.

Linguistic experts think that the better a child speaks his native language, the better reader he will be.

III. COMMENTS AND EVALUATION OF THE LINGUISTIC APPROACH

Some elements of the Linguistic approach are new and some are not. The new elements include teaching diacritical marks and elements of sentence structure to beginning readers. The teaching of phonetically regular words first is the same as in a "Phonetics-First" Approach. The teaching of intonation (stress, pitch, and juncture) is definitely not new, although it has not been taught specifically to young children recently. Donald Barr, headmaster of the Dalton Schools in New York City, in an article "Taught to the Tune of a Hickory Stick" (Book Week, January 19, 1965) has pointed this out. He says that McGuffey's Fifth Reader, 1879 Edition, contains 18 pages of explanations and exercises devoted to stress, pitch, and juncture very similar to, and nearly as subtle as, the analyses of modern linguists.

IV. IN MY OPINION

I do not feel qualified to make an evaluation of the Linguistic Approach because I have not seen any research reports on it yet. Dr. Bond stated that preliminary reports from the First-Grade Reading Study indicate that young children seem to learn to use diacritical marks very readily. He made a personal comment to the CCPE Curriculum Committee meeting that he thought using phonetically regular words did not provide the children with very interesting reading material. I think this criticism can be answered by saying that children can learn phonetically regular words faster so their vocabulary is not restricted very long. Actually, children may like to work with nonsense material and rhyming words as demonstrated by the fact that Dr. Seuss' books based on phonetically regular words are very popular.

THE INITIAL TEACHING ALPHABET

by

Mrs. Barbara Vlaming

THE INITIAL TEACHING ALPHABET

Mrs. Barbara G. Vlaming

I. THE INITIAL TEACHING ALPHABET*

The Initial Teaching Alphabet is a forty-four character introductory training alphabet designed to facilitate the difficult task of learning to read.

II. DISCUSSION OF THE INITIAL TEACHING ALPHABET

A. The Alphabet Itself

For over a century there have been people in English speaking countries who believed the traditional alphabet and spelling of English contain so many complexities and inconsistencies that they are a definite causal factor in reading disability. Over one hundred years ago Sir Isaac Pitman, inventor of phonetic shorthand, began experimenting with a new alphabet. The experiments culminated in the work of Sir Isaac's grandson, Sir James Pitman, who devised an ingenious forty-four letter alphabet in such a way that each character or symbol has only one look and sound and each sound has only one spelling. With traditional spelling, on the other hand, these forty-four sounds can be spelled 2,000 different ways. Since this alphabet is designed to be used as an initial teaching medium to be superseded by the traditional alphabet once the child has gained facility in reading, the symbols are similar to or identical with the symbols employed in traditional printed matter. Twenty-four symbols are identical with the letters of our alphabet (all except q and x, which sounds are represented in our alphabet by other letters) while the others are augmentations of them (see Figure 1, p. 36).

The proponents of i/t/a believe this system ensures speedier progress and greater success in the early stage of learning to read because the process has been simplified in a number of ways:

1. Fewer characters have to be learned. Instead of learning a small letter "a" and capital "A", the child learns that capital letters are formed by enlarging the small letter symbol.

*In this discussion, Initial Teaching Alphabet will be abbreviated i/t/a. The regular alphabet or traditional orthography will be designated as t/o.

2. Fewer whole word representations have to be learned.
Dog always looks the same.

t/o (traditional orthography)

i/t/a

dog
Dog
DOG

dog

3. Less variation in spelling is permitted. With i/t/a, sounds are spelled as they look. With traditional spelling, three basic problems exist:

- (1) The same sound is represented by different letters or letter combinations:

- (a) city - sun
(b) gem - jam
(c) o as in: go, bow, doe, dough, sew, beau, yeoman, note, boat;
i as in: aisle, aye, height, geyser, child, indict, lie, sign, island, choir, guide, buy, by, style;

t/o

i/t/a

do group
grew moon
two canoe

dɯ grɯp
grɯ mɯn
tɯ canɯ

- (2) The same letter or group of letters represents different sounds:

- (a) city - cat
(b) got - gem
(c) ough as in: dough, rough, through, cough, hiccough;

t/o

i/t/a

go
do
women
gone
one

gœ
dɯ
wimen
gon
wun

- (3) There is relatively little relationship between the number of phonemes (the smallest meaningful unit of sound) and the number of graphemes (letters) in any given word.

t/o

No. of Phonemes

i/t/a

chat

3

chat

through	3	thr w
black	4	black
thought	3	thou t
laughed	4	laft
singer	5	sing er

4. Left to right sequence is encouraged. In i/t/a the child can proceed from left to right and sound out the symbols in the order in which they occur. In t/o the child does not know the sound value to attach to a letter until he notes the particular word pattern, which may create directional confusion for the young reader. For example, use of the silent "e":

<u>t/o</u>	<u>i/t/a</u>
cape	cæ p
dive	die v
home	hœ m

5. Learning of digraphs (letter combinations) is facilitated. A basic problem in traditional print is that a child learns to associate certain sounds with letters but then learns that when these two letters appear together they represent a completely different sound. In i/t/a letter combinations are represented by an individual symbol:

<u>t/o</u>	<u>i/t/a</u>
cat	cat
hat	hat
chat	chat
which	which
thy	thie
thigh	thie

Although there is a much greater consistency between sound and symbol in i/t/a than in traditional orthography, there are still some inconsistencies in i/t/a which have been allowed in order to ease the transition from i/t/a to traditional print. A few of these are:

- (1) Wherever double letters are employed in traditional print, they are also used in i/t/a.
- (2) Both "c" and "k" are employed in i/t/a to represent the same sound.
- (3) There are two symbols to represent the beginning sound in "zinc".
- (4) The unstressed neutral vowel sound is spelled many ways in i/t/a depending on the way it is spelled in traditional orthography.

B. Where It is Taught

The Initial Teaching Alphabet (referred to as the Augmented Roman Alphabet in Britain) was first used in England in the fall of 1961. Almost 10,000 British children have been taught to read using the new alphabet, and there are plans to expand its use greatly. It is being used also in Canada, Wales, Australia, Africa, Israel, and the U.S.S.R.

Under a \$148,000 grant received from the Fund for the Advancement of Education, Lehigh University and the Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, school system initiated the first and largest school demonstration and evaluation program in the United States using i/t/a for reading instruction. Dr. Albert Mazurkiewicz, head of the Reading Clinic, was chosen to administer the three-year demonstration, and Dr. Rebecca Stewart, director of elementary education in the Bethlehem public schools, was named to help coordinate the project. I/t/a was started in the fall of 1963 with 15 first grade classes, while 30 classes remained with the traditional alphabet. In 1964, 30 classes using i/t/a are being compared with 15 in t/o. In the fall of 1965, all Bethlehem first grades will have the new alphabet. Bethlehem is considered a good place for the test because its schools represent a fair cross section of the American public school, with pupils from varied socio-cultural backgrounds. A large number of "culturally deprived" children were included in the experimental group, for it was felt that if i/t/a were as effective as suggested by England's results, these linguistically deficient children should be given greater opportunity to participate the first year.

In addition to the study in Bethlehem, i/t/a was introduced in 1963 to some 3,000 pupils in six states, and to 20,000 pupils in 30 states in 1964. Owatonna and St. Cloud, Minnesota, are among the cities using i/t/a in first grade classes.

The Initial Teaching Alphabet has been used to some extent with older children and adults for remedial reading. Some illiterate parents of i/t/a children have learned to read fluently after six weeks of evening classes.

In Uniondale, New York, Dr. Harold Tanyzer, assistant professor of reading and education, Hofstra University, helped set up an experimental course for 15 semiliterate teenagers, most of whom were troublemakers and potential dropouts. Although the students had reluctantly agreed to try i/t/a and the teacher had grave doubts about the course, the students learned the alphabet in 35 minutes. After four months they were reading their high school textbooks transcribed into i/t/a and soon after began to transfer their new confidence and reading skill to the traditional alphabet which once defeated them.

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In Lompoc, California, an after-school i/t/a class was held for ten third-graders whose reading ability was a year or more below their grade level. They continued to get traditional reading lessons in their regular third grade classrooms. In five months every one of them pulled up to grade level.

Enthusiasts have suggested that i/t/a also could be used to teach the deaf and people in underdeveloped countries.

C. Training of Teachers

The Initial Teaching Alphabet is not a method of teaching, although its advocates believe it permits a better use of many existing methods and encourages the development of new ones. Actually, methods of teaching reading using i/t/a have proved very compatible with methods using standard orthography. Thus new teachers of i/t/a are not trained in a new method of teaching but usually have a two to three day workshop session, which includes learning how to write the alphabet and how to spell using i/t/a. Teachers in the Bethlehem experiment readily learned the 20 additional symbols but had some minor difficulty in learning to transcribe sounds into print.

D. How It is Taught

In Bethlehem, the methodology used emphasizes the deciphering of the printed code by teaching children to associate each of the forty-four symbols with the spoken sound it represents. I/t/a workbooks introduce the letters not in their regular ABC order but according to the frequency with which the sounds occur in words. As the child learns the first few letters (a, n, t), he also is taught how to read and write the words those letters can form. Simultaneously, reading activities that develop thinking skills are stressed to insure that children approach reading from the outset as a meaning-getting process. Both the experimental and control population are using a language arts approach to reading instruction in which writing is used as an aid to reading development. Experience story use is emphasized; wide supplemental reading is encouraged; and variety in the basic material for instruction is promoted. The control population is, however, using a basal (see page ||) program of instruction.

A check on the i/t/a program in Bethlehem during the fifth month showed that a complete freedom to utilize the best teaching procedures existed. Experience approach, combined with group activity and with individualized instruction were all utilized.

Books in i/t/a presented a problem at first, but the situation has been improved. In the first British classes, the

prevailing controlled-vocabulary readers were taken over and reproduced, using the new Pitman alphabet. The pace was slow because the text was originally written to develop the child's sight vocabulary. Since then, John A. Downing, reading research officer, Institute of Education, University of London, has written a series of five colorful, well-written, and attractively printed readers.

Special reading materials that introduce more words more rapidly and use more natural language patterns were prepared by Dr. Tanyzer and Dr. Mazurkiewicz and were published by a new American Company, Initial Teaching Alphabet Publications, Inc. They also print books in i/t/a for supplementary reading, though the purchase of these books by parents is not encouraged. According to Dr. Mazurkiewicz, a child who is being trained in the i/t/a program can read traditionally-spelled material quite effectively. On completing transition to t/o, he should not return to books written in i/t/a. The transition is more effectively achieved if the child's supplementary reading is non-i/t/a material.

In content and organization the new i/t/a readers have made history, too, because on several counts they have broken with the stereotype of the traditional basic readers. There is no Dick-and-Jane family in every story, enjoying the pleasant but unexciting events of a sunny, prosperous world. Instead, each i/t/a reader is a collection of unrelated stories about such unorthodox subjects as piracy, space travel, baseball, a cattle round-up, deep-sea diving, and children's problems with their parents. They are stories with something happening. They have plot, suspense, humor, and even pathos - ingredients rarely found in traditional first grade readers. However, the first two readers use the distorted, unchildlike sentence structure of the old basal readers. (For example, "up, up, up it climbed".)

In sheer bulk the i/t/a readers outstrip all their predecessors. Books two through seven provide 100 different stories on 860 pages. They use 1,557 different words, as compared to 543 in the Macmillan first grade books and 235 in the Laidlaw series.

Of marked significance is the appearance of dark-skinned children in six of the 100 stories.

E. Transition

The Initial Teaching Alphabet is based on the notion that if an adult can read i/t/a after growing up and using t/o for years, the reverse can happen and the child can shift from i/t/a to t/o. The transfer is made only after the child is reading and writing fluently in i/t/a, ideally by the end of the first grade.

In the Bethlehem experiment, transition was begun by a segment of the population in the third and fourth month of instruction. Five to eight per cent of pupils in average classrooms (middle class populations) were reading t/o materials at that time, though instruction was continuing in i/t/a materials, indicating that transition was evolving naturally. No confusion was evident in such children's movement from one medium to the other.

Transition was started formally in April of 1964 by the top groups. This phase is concerned with teaching a recognition of the most frequent traditional spelling patterns for sounds. As such, it is seen to be the beginning of a formal spelling program. Teacher reports indicate that 64% of the good socio-economic population were then (and had been for some time) reading traditional alphabet library materials on varying levels of difficulty.

F. Research

A large-scale experiment involving 2,500 four and five year olds in 75 primary schools in England was started in September, 1961. This experimental group was compared with a similar group taught reading by conventional methods. Results up to March of 1963 (roughly a year and two-thirds of teaching) indicate:

1. Children using i/t/a progress much more rapidly through the basic reading series than do children taught conventionally.
2. As measured by the Neale Analysis of Reading Ability, the i/t/a group scored significantly better in reading comprehension and in reading accuracy.
3. The experimental group scored significantly better on a standardized test of word recognition, even though the test was printed in standard orthography and many of the children had not had formal instruction in this medium. On the Schonell test of word recognition at the beginning of the third grade, the average score for the i/t/a pupils was 34.4 which corresponds to a reading age of 8.4 years. On the other hand, pupils who had been taught to read in t/o scored, on the average, 24.1 which corresponds to a reading age of 7.4 years.

In Media, Pennsylvania, 26 first-graders began learning to read with i/t/a in September, 1963. After finishing their first readers they were tested and results showed that the lowest scoring i/t/a child did better than the highest scoring child from the traditional classes.

In the U. S., the largest controlled investigation is the one in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. There, using sub-samples statistically equivalent in chronological age and I.Q. to the major populations, it was found at the end of the fifth month of the first grade that almost 58% of the i/t/a population achieved the third reader instructional level or higher on the transliterated Botel Word Recognition Inventory as compared to only 3.6% of the t/o population which achieved third reader instructional status on the identical but t/o form of the inventory. The median reading achievement of the control group was at the primer level.

In the eighth month of school, reading levels and the degree of achievement found in the two populations favored the i/t/a groups, as shown below:

TABLE I

Instructional Levels of the Total Population

<u>Reader Level</u>	<u>i/t/a</u> <u>N=451</u>	<u>t/o</u> <u>N=814</u>
3rd	24%	0%
2nd	50.7%	6.1%
1st	14%	74.4%
Primer or below	11.3%	19.5%

Since over 40% of the experimental population is made up of the group of children usually described as "culturally deprived", a comparison of the achievement of the two groups shows a somewhat distorted picture, with the experimental population being negatively weighted.

TABLE II

Instructional Levels of the Higher Socio-Economic Populations

<u>Reader Level</u>	<u>i/t/a</u> <u>N=270</u>	<u>t/o</u> <u>N=612</u>
3rd	40%	0%
2nd	53.3%	8.2%
1st	5.6%	81%
Primer or below	1.1%	10.8%

Here a greater disparity of achievement in favor of the i/t/a population is seen. Over 93% of the i/t/a population are reading second reader or above material as compared with only 8.25 of the t/o group. A significantly smaller group of the i/t/a children are at the primer or below point, seemingly indicating a virtual elimination of the non-reader in the i/t/a population.

TABLE III

Instructional Levels of the Low Socio-Economic Populations

<u>Reader Level</u>	<u>i/t/a</u> <u>N=181</u>	<u>t/o</u> <u>N=202</u>
2nd	47%	0%
1st	26.5%	54.5%
Primer or below	26.5%	46.5%

Standardized tests in the t/o form were given during the ninth month (May) to the 114 i/t/a children who had made the transition and had been in t/o materials for at least a week and to 114 t/o children who were matched on socio-economic status, I.Q., sex and age. The results indicate that the i/t/a population by and large are superior to the matched group of readers who had received initial instruction in t/o, as shown in Table IV.

TABLE IV

<u>California Reading Test</u> <u>Reading Grade Equivalent</u>	<u>i/t/a</u> <u>N=114</u>	<u>t/o</u> <u>N=114</u>
4 and over	1.6%	0%
3	28%	11%
2	61%	56%
1.5 - 1.9	9%	21%
1.0 - 1.4	0%	12%

III. THE GOOD POINTS OF THE INITIAL TEACHING ALPHABET

1. As evidenced by the research now available, children can learn to read more quickly when their beginning reading program is printed in i/t/a. Reading failures are greatly reduced.
2. Children develop confidence and a positive attitude toward reading and writing because of the consistency of i/t/a.
3. The books used are filled with interesting stories because i/t/a permits more natural language patterns with less repetition.
4. One of the claims British teachers have made is that behavior problems in classes using i/t/a drop dramatically because of the elimination of frustration in learning to read and increased success in reading. (Because of this claim, personality effects are being studied longitudinally in the Bethlehem experiment.)

5. One very definite result of i/t/a which can be seen is better writing.
6. Teachers report vastly increased ability to spell common words.
7. Reading performance by i/t/a taught children in t/o, post-transition, as measured by standardized tests is significantly better than that developed by children taught by similar procedures but in which the medium is t/o.
8. Children in i/t/a appear to develop superior sounding techniques and are very proficient in phonics after a short time. To the extent to which our traditional orthography is consistent at least, this should serve them in good stead throughout their reading life.
9. Sometimes improvement of speech defects is a natural by-product of i/t/a. It acts as a visual guide in developing ear acuity and improving certain speech defects. For example, a boy who had not been helped by speech therapists noticed one day in an i/t/a class that he was writing "das di en" when others were writing "that's the end". He improved his own speech gradually without any help.
10. Teachers report that i/t/a children develop independent work habits much earlier than usual, appear to have better test-taking ability because of improved work habits, have a greater capacity for work, appear to be more self-motivated in learning situations, and show a greater enthusiasm for books.

IV. THE POSSIBLE DRAWBACKS OF THE INITIAL TEACHING ALPHABET

The faults of i/t/a are more in the nature of questions or cautions:

1. The i/t/a assumes that the nature of the sound-symbol relationships in English is a primary cause of reading disability.
2. The use of i/t/a may tend to focus attention on the medium, the alphabet or written code, rather than on teaching method. There is still a great deal more to know about how to teach reading and we must not short-circuit interest and research in this area of the total field of reading instruction.
3. There may be a tendency on the part of teachers and especially parents to view i/t/a as a panacea for all of our reading ills.
4. Teachers are going to have to resist the temptation to over-emphasize the sounding approach to word recognition.

5. How much of the success of i/t/a may be attributed to the Hawthorne effect (the enthusiasm of parents, teachers, pupils and all concerned for a new program or experiment)?
6. Is transition to t/o truly successful and what are the long-range effects of initial instruction in i/t/a?
7. What is the effect on the child who has been led to believe that the language he is going to read bears consistent relationships between sound and symbol only to find out that it is very inconsistent?

V. DISCUSSION OF THE GOOD POINTS AND DRAWBACKS OF THE INITIAL TEACHING ALPHABET

The i/t/a has won enthusiastic approval in some quarters while raising questions in others. Attitudes toward it range from very enthusiastic through interested but cautious to frankly skeptical.

When Dr. Rebecca Stewart, supervisor of the Bethlehem program, was asked if she had found any disadvantages, she answered, "I keep expecting some disadvantages to crop up. I've been teaching too long to expect miracles, but so far I have found no handicaps. The children learn to read faster. Some begin to shift over to reading traditional English by December. They write freely. By the end of the school year most of them have shifted over to traditional English. Many entering second grade are already reading at third and fourth grade level. If there is a flaw in i/t/a, I have yet to find it."

As far as research is concerned, it is generally agreed that it is too soon to draw definite conclusions. At this time, the results of the Lehigh-Bethlehem experiment are available for only the first year and of the British only for the first three years. However, results of available research, both in the United States and Britain, definitely indicate that children do learn to read more quickly and that the number of reading failures are greatly reduced.

Many believe that early confidence in learning to read and write is important. It is argued that the inconsistencies of the English language cause some children to become bewildered and discouraged and to remain nonreaders all their lives. Others learn very slowly. The child is first told repeatedly that print runs from left to right. Then he sounds out his letters from left to right, only to run into silent "e", for example, which forces him to go back and correct his pronunciation: kit...kit-e. After a few of these contradictions, he often has to be coaxed to try unfamiliar words. Every letter in our alphabet, from "a" in "head" to "z" in "rendezvous" is sometimes silent. Thus the child is confronted with a silent letter when he has barely

learned what that letter sounds like. Most children survive these embarrassments, but some take their little defeats seriously and are apt to dodge writing, flinch from reading and drop out of school as soon as they can. There is a wide-spread belief that many high school dropouts were created back in the first grade, where their attitudes toward study were formed.

Charlotte Timm, reference librarian, Bowling Green (Ohio) State University Library, studied at the i/t/a workshop at Lehigh University. She wrote in the Wilson Library Bulletin, "Learning to read is a process which the normal child approaches with suspicion. He often develops a violent and thoroughly natural prejudice because before he can read at all, he is forced to undergo a rigorous and, to his mind, totally arbitrary period of drudgery merely to master the traditional alphabet. This is true no matter what method of teaching is used -- 'look-say', 'whole word', articulated phonics, configuration (look, find, and trace), or a combination of several methods which is the usual procedure.

During the months that pass, while the child acquires his stumbling facility at translating the printed word, his suspicion that the game is not worth the candle often gives place to certainty. No one who has observed the violent mental struggle a child undergoes in order to learn, for instance, that a cat has a long, slender tail (a fact of which he is already cognizant and to which he attributes little or no consequence) can fail to sympathize with him in his belief that he has been duped.

A first grade program, easier and more meaningful to the child, is presented in the Initial Teaching Alphabet, devised to make the beginning reader's task more consistent, logical, and interesting."

Dr. Robert Dykstra, Assistant Professor of Elementary Education, and Dr. Guy Bond, Professor of Education, College of Education, University of Minnesota, are presently working on the First Grade Reading Project sponsored by the U. S. Office of Education. (See page) The project involves a nation-wide study of methods and approaches to the teaching of reading. Dykstra and Bond have studied and visited the i/t/a classes in Bethlehem. We were privileged to have both Dr. Dykstra and Dr. Bond as the guest speakers at two of our Curriculum Committee meetings. Dr. Dykstra spoke on the Initial Teaching Alphabet and Dr. Bond on the First Grade Reading Project, which involves a study of i/t/a as well as other approaches to and methods of teaching reading. Dr. Dykstra asked the question, "What is the effect on the child who has been led to believe that the language he is going to read bears consistent relationships between sound and symbol when he attempts to sound out:

colonel yacht laugh enough Gila

May not the frustration be greater than if he realized the inconsistencies all along?

The one thing on which there is general agreement is that i/t/a produces a large number of free, self-expressive first grade writers, some of whom start writing creatively in the second month of school. In Bethlehem, 95% of the i/t/a children were writing in first grade. The children's free, uninhibited compositions often gave a special insight into their personalities, which prompted Dr. Gordon Barclay of New York's Rockland State Hospital to undertake a three and one-half year study of i/t/a and emotionally disturbed children.

There is some question regarding improved spelling ability of i/t/a children. Teachers report that i/t/a children spell better, very likely due to the awareness of sound and symbol which these children have. In the Bethlehem experiment, informal spelling achievement tests indicated that the i/t/a trained group was experiencing high success (86% accuracy) on words spelled the same in i/t/a and t/o, although they had not had formal instruction or study. This compared favorably with the 65% accuracy of a similar population who had learned only t/o spellings. However, when the 114 i/t/a children who had made the transition to t/o were tested along with the 114 matched children in the t/o group, there existed no significant difference in the t/o spelling ability of the two groups.

Although reading performance by i/t/a children, post-transition, as measured by standardized tests is significantly better, the amount of research data is limited. Dr. Dykstra pointed out that perhaps the comparison between the two groups of 114 students tested in the Bethlehem experiment is not a valid one. The 114 i/t/a students are undoubtedly the best readers at the end of the first grade as evidenced by the fact that they made the transition to traditional print. On the other hand, the 114 readers taught by t/o are matched on the basis of I.Q., socioeconomic status, sex, and age, but may not have been the best t/o readers. Therefore, it appears that the best readers from the i/t/a population are being compared to a group from the t/o population similar in many respects but not necessarily the best readers from the group. On the other hand, it should be noted that the i/t/a group had been in t/o for only a short time and may have been somewhat at a disadvantage in being tested in a t/o standardized test at this early date, as Dr. Mazurkiewicz pointed out.

The i/t/a assumes that the nature of the sound-symbol relationship in English is a primary cause of reading disability. However, no one claims it is the only one. Sir James Pitman believes that our alphabet unnecessarily compounds Johnny's difficulties in learning to read. Dr. Albert Mazurkiewicz, director of the Lehigh-Bethlehem study, stated as one of his tentative conclusions at the end of the first year of the study that "traditional spelling of English is a significant source of difficulty in beginning reading though not the only factor in reading retardation." Dr. Donald Durrell of Boston University, one of the

best-known reading specialists in the country, predicts, "It will be forgotten in ten years. The i/t/a people make the assumption that children's chief reading difficulties come from our language's variations in spelling and sound. The assumption is unwarranted. Actually, reading problems can grow from hundreds of causes."

John A. Downing, University of London researcher in charge of the British i/t/a project, has written a book on the problem of beginning readers called Two Bee or Not To Be, the Augmented Roman Alphabet. In answer to the question, "Is there any evidence that spelling irregularities do cause reading failure?", Mr. Downing states, "Most of the actual evidence against the traditional alphabet and spelling of English as a medium of teaching reading has come from the attempts of educationists to replace its allegedly hampering inconsistencies with a simplified code for beginners...They have felt that, because reading consists basically of deciphering a code, this skill might best be developed by starting the young beginner on a simple systematic code, and then, when he can do this rapidly and confidently, he should move on to the more complex code used in the traditional spelling of English. Reports of astonishing successes have resulted from the various attempts made during the past 120 years..."

Many educators warn against regarding i/t/a as the panacea for all our reading ills, despite its apparent success. Dr. Dykstra pointed out that some languages are represented in writing much more consistently than English and in some cases almost completely consistently, but children who use these languages do not find learning to read a simple task. The disabled reader has not disappeared from the scene in countries in which these languages are used. However, these countries apparently have fewer nonreaders. William D. Boutwell, vice president and acting editor of Scholastic Magazine, was excited and convinced by visiting i/t/a classes in Bethlehem and in England. When he visited a Utrecht University education professor, he told of the new alphabet and its apparent success. The professor was not surprised. "In Netherlands," he said, "children learn to read in about three months. This is what happens in most countries where spelling accurately represents word sounds."

Dr. Dykstra believes that teachers are going to have to resist the temptation to overemphasize the sounding approach to word recognition. With a consistent code which makes it possible to sound out every word, it's only natural that teachers encourage children to sound out new words. There may also be a temptation to limit repetition of words in reading materials and to limit practice on rapid recognition techniques. Just as we expect children to progress from counting two plus two on their fingers, we must insist that children learn to recognize common words on sight and not unlock them anew every time they appear in print. Dr. Bond noticed when he visited i/t/a classes that there are more word by word readers and the children are somewhat more analytical, but points out that this may not hold over.

The big question in the minds of most people is: How well will these children read and spell after they leave i/t/a behind?

John Downing said at Syracuse University in the summer of 1964, "It is too early to know for sure." At that time his classroom testing had been under way two years. Dr. Mazurkiewicz was far more optimistic after six months with the i/t/a. "The transfer from i/t/a spelling to traditional spelling is not so difficult as it seems," he said. "Forty per cent of the words children learn in first grade are spelled phonetically in traditional letters: man, got, in, very, and milk, for example. In many others the Pitman symbol is quite similar to the traditional letter."

Nancy Larrick, former president of the International Reading Association and well-known writer about children and their education, writes, "Although early tests indicate that children taught with i/t/a are reading far better than those using the traditional alphabet, we don't know yet how well i/t/a-taught children will unlearn the Pitman symbols and convert to the peculiarities of conventional English spelling. We don't know whether as adults they will read more easily than their neighbors. Nor do we know whether children from less privileged homes will come through as genuinely successful readers. We do know that the effectiveness of any teaching materials depends in large part on the skill of the teacher in helping each child as an individual. The Initial Teaching Alphabet is no different."

Dr. Warren G. Cutts, reading specialist for the U. S. Office of Education, says, "This is a very interesting thing, but we don't know yet what the long-range effect will be. Many new methods of teaching have been tried through the years, and most have proved disappointing. I am very much in favor of this experiment, but I say, 'Let's take a closer look.' We don't know yet whether there will be any residual effect on the child from using the i/t/a alphabet. Only time will tell."

After enumerating the pros and cons of i/t/a in his talk to our committee, Dr. Dykstra concluded: "It seems imperative that we view i/t/a objectively. On the one hand we must resist the temptation to write it off as just another fad. The startling success of the program both in England and the U. S. certainly warrants our taking a longer look at what it has to offer. On the other hand, there is no reason for viewing i/t/a as the panacea, the cure-all. It appears safe to make the prediction that some children will encounter difficulty in learning to read even with a consistent alphabet. However, if further experimentation adds additional evidence that the use of i/t/a will decrease the number of unfortunate youngsters who fail to learn how to read or write, then it is certainly essential that teachers and school administrators everywhere become familiar with this exciting new approach to the teaching of beginning reading."

VI. IN MY OPINION --

I have tried to present the facts and the various arguments, pro and con, regarding i/t/a. Reading and studying about this new approach to reading has been fascinating, and I, personally, have been left with a feeling of interest in and enthusiasm for it. It appears to me that the Pitman alphabet may prove to be a true breakthrough in the attempt to solve some of the problems of the beginning reader. However, I agree with Dr. Dykstra and the many others who believe that it is too early to come to definite conclusions regarding i/t/a. It will be years before the first children to learn i/t/a can be followed through their schooling to adulthood. The testing and comparison of larger numbers of children over a longer period of time should give us a clearer picture of the effectiveness of i/t/a. However, its apparent success would seem to warrant continued use of i/t/a until the results of research and study can be evaluated.

girls and boys learn
to read with i/t/a

æ b c d ee
face bed cat dog key

f g h ie j k
feet leg hat fly jug key

l m n oe p r
letter man nest over pen girl

r s t ue v w
red spoon tree use voice window

y z s wh ch
yes zebra daisy when chair

th th sh 3 r
three the shop television ring

a au a e i o
father ball cap egg milk box

u w w ou oi
up book spoon out oil

FIGURE 1

Pitman's Initial Teaching Alphabet
with its 44 symbols and words illustrating
the sounds these symbols represent.

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THE LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH

by

Mrs. Mary Jane Higley

THE LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH

Mrs. Mary Jane S. Higley

I. SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES AND CONCLUSIONS

The Language Experience Approach recognizes the relatedness and interdependence of the communications skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Based on the child's personal experiences and on his ability to think and reason and relate, these skills are developed simultaneously.

There is no question here as to the relative place of word recognition and comprehension. Thinking is an essential part of each attempt at communication, and the words which the child uses are those which already have meaning for him. As Sylvia Ashton-Warner¹ states so well in her book, Teacher, the "key vocabulary," i.e., the vocabulary which finally "launches the child into reading", consists of words which have emotional significance for the individual. David H. Russell³ expresses the same opinion by recognizing that thinking cannot be purely intellectual, but always contains personal and emotional factors.

Most children, when they come to school, are able to communicate verbally, at least to some extent; they have learned to say the words needed to fulfill their needs. Capitalizing on this asset, the kindergarten teacher encourages boys and girls to express themselves through speaking as well as through painting and drawing. Common experiences related to the on-going program of the classroom, as well as individual experiences, in and out of school, furnish the "subject matter" for this communication. Listening to stories read and told by the teacher is still another way of broadening experiences.

Throughout the primary grades, boys and girls are continually encouraged to express themselves, first through various art media and through speaking, later through dictated stories, and still later through writing.

Using his own experiences, his feelings and emotions, his hopes and aspirations, the child creates a major part of his own reading materials. Motivation becomes less of a problem, because the child is talking, reading, and writing about, and listening to, things which are already important to him. Also, he learns early in his school experience that all language, whether written or spoken, is a means of communicating ideas. His ideas, he finds, are important to other people -- the words he speaks can be written down and read by other people. His paintings and drawings are an integral part of these reading materials.

II. THE LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH

In the primary grades, the teacher gives the child many opportunities to produce drawings and paintings which reflect his own interests and are a result of his thinking. He also is encouraged to talk about his pictures, sometimes with the whole class, sometimes in a small group, and sometimes with just one other individual. From this oral expression, the teacher may extract a phrase or a sentence summarizing the child's ideas. This "story", in the child's own language, is recorded for the child in his presence.

As she writes the stories, the teacher may call attention to letter formation, capitalization and punctuation, relationship of beginning sounds to the symbols she writes, and to the repetition of common sounds and words. As they watch and talk informally, the children are being helped to see that whatever they say can be symbolized through the "magic" letters of the alphabet.

Through these experiences, the child begins to recognize his own language in print, to see similarities between his language and the language of others, and to recognize, at sight, words in his speaking and listening vocabulary.

Every effort is made to preserve the child's own style, as in the following story from a first grade child:

"The chickens cannot swallow the water. They have to put their heads back to get it down to their tummy. They got wobbly noises."

The development of logic is evident, too, in the dictated stories, as in this example:

"Anna was feeling the eggs to see if they were cold or hot. If they were cold they were laid that morning. If they were hot they were just laid. Anna said they were cold. We knew they were laid that morning."

Often the teacher binds several of these stories into books which may be used in follow-up activities. These classroom-produced books are usually the most popular choices for independent reading and may be used also for small groups for instructional purposes. As soon as they are able, children are encouraged to copy simple stories of their own.

During the time when the child is not working with the teacher, he is encouraged to engage in a variety of possible independent activities. The use of materials such as paint, crayons, and clay allows the child to express himself freely, away from the restrictions of a limited vocabulary.

The teacher is constantly on the alert for the time when each child is ready to begin writing his own stories. Often a child will say, "I can write it myself". When this "self-commitment" is made, the teacher makes every attempt to help the child plan his work and acquire the skills he needs to carry out the plan. Charts and word lists are planned cooperatively to help him with his spelling and to increase his vocabulary. Through these charts and lists, boys and girls learn to recognize frequently used words, as well as words needed for specific kinds of writing.

Books are used continually by the teacher to enrich the backgrounds of the children, and boys and girls soon discover that books are useful for finding words they need to spell and for getting ideas. When the child has learned a basic sight vocabulary, through writing and reading his own materials, pre-primers and other beginning books present few problems.

By combining a variety of self-expression activities with a balanced reading program, a learning environment is provided where skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking are seen as truly related facets of the general area of communication.

III. EVALUATION OF RESULTS

The success of the Language Experience Approach is largely dependent on the enthusiasm of the teacher and on her willingness to adjust the learning environment to the needs of the individual learners. The nature of the program demands a democratic organization and an informal arrangement of the classroom. The environment needs to be conducive to manipulation and experimentation, with space and time provided for small group and individual projects. Since the promotion of communication is a major goal, there is less emphasis on a quiet classroom; since creative and divergent thinking is valued, there is less concern for the one-and-only "right" answer. The inadequate and inept "natural language" of boys and girls is accepted and recognized as the raw material from which the child builds more mature and acceptable language patterns.

A teacher who is not committed to this philosophy or who is not secure in a creative and less than formally structured environment, would probably find this approach uncomfortable.

Necessarily, the experience curriculum should be evaluated on a much broader base than we have used in more traditional programs. The standards for evaluation are harder to describe, and we have no standardized test which measures completely the effectiveness of this approach.

Dorris Lee² states, "The highest standards for evaluating a reading program in our society are ones which require that each child is directed toward independence in learning and confidence in his own thinking." She suggests the following as guides for evaluation:

1. Productive thinking is generated.
2. Freedom of expression is allowed.
3. Individual talents and skills are used.
4. Thinking is modified as children add new learnings.
5. Curiosity is satisfied through exploration.
6. Personal discipline is practiced as children are freed to work productively.
7. Personal satisfaction is achieved by the learner.

There is no good accumulation of data, so far, which measures the success of the Language Experience approach by these yardsticks.

IV. IN MY OPINION --

The Language Experience Approach has much to recommend it as a logical way for beginning reading instruction. Recognizing that experience is a necessary condition for learning, this method builds on the past experience of the child, and provides additional planned experiences to widen his horizons.

Active participation is also a natural part of this process, since the child not only reads what he and other children have written, but actually writes his own "stories" and helps write "books".

Successful experiences are numerous, since the child writes and reads for the enjoyment of others as well as for himself. His pleasure and satisfaction with his own creations is reinforced by the positive reactions of others.

This approach makes effective use of the psychological motives which Smith and Dechant⁴ list as energizing and directing forces in learning -- self-esteem, self-realization, curiosity, security, and the need to be successful and to belong.

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THE PROGRAMMED READING APPROACH

by

Mrs. Cyrilla Schimschock

THE PROGRAMMED READING APPROACH

Mrs. Cyrilla Schimschock

I. THE METHOD

The programmed teaching of reading is intended to serve the same purpose as the teaching machine. Programmed instruction takes the principle of readiness seriously. It is a child-centered rather than a demonstration-centered text. It relies chiefly on the child's own interaction with the program.

The reading program, commonly described as the programmed approach to the teaching of reading was prepared in a unique way. Groups of children were tested to find out what materials they would like to have in a reading program, and how they thought these materials should be organized. Teams of psychologists, linguists, programmers, teachers, and reading specialists then prepared the materials to the children's specifications.

The books which the children designed did not resemble traditional readers. The children demanded that each letter maintain a constant sound so that they could attack words with absolute confidence. By simply saying the sounds of the letters, they were then sure that they could pronounce each new word and develop their own regular system of reading and spelling.

Thus the vocabulary words in the program were chosen both for their high interest to children and for their phonetic regularity. They were not the highly irregular words which appear in the traditional reading lists.

The children did not like the complicated pictures in traditional readers. They demanded simple cartoon-like illustrations which emphasized the point of each sentence. They wanted to help write the sentences themselves, and they wanted to be able to check immediately to see whether or not they had written the words correctly.

As soon as a version of the program was completed, it was immediately tested on a class of children. The children's errors and comments on each sentence were carefully compiled and evaluated. The program was then rewritten to eliminate the errors and to incorporate the criticisms of the children and their teachers. Each illustration was also changed as the children directed. This process was continued for eight years with many thousands of children participating. The end result was a series of readers which represent a record of the way in which thousands of children have learned how to read.

II. THE CONTENT OF THE PROGRAMMED READING APPROACH

The materials for the Programmed Reading approach as provided by a major publisher consist of a prereading series which is followed by three levels of programmed workbooks, each with its accompanying hard-cover reader and tests. Teacher's materials include alphabet cards, sound-symbol cards, filmstrips, teacher's manuals, diagnostic placement tests, end-of-book tests, and final examinations. It is said by its proponents to be the most complete inventory of material for the teaching of reading yet developed.

III. TEACHING WITH PROGRAMMED READING

At the end of kindergarten or at the beginning of the first-grade year, the teacher presents the prereading course, which is divided into three stages. In Stage I the child learns the letters of the alphabet. In Stage II he learns the sounds for eight of these letters which he will use to begin reading. Stage III is the Programmed Primer, the child's first book. Under the teacher's direction, the child learns to read and write in the book and to check his own answers.

After finishing the Programmed Primer, all students take the Reading Readiness Test. Those who score 80 or better are able to start work immediately in their programmed readers. From this point on, each student works independently at his own pace, checking his own responses, and calling for the teacher's help only when he has finished one of the frequent tests or when he has a problem that he cannot solve. The teacher is free to tutor each individual child, while the rest of the students continue to work at maximum speed.

Any student who receives a grade of less than 80 per cent on the Reading Readiness Test studies a supplementary section of the primer. After he finishes this section, he starts Book 1.

Although a series of programmed readers can easily be completed in a year by the average child, each series contains more material than is usually presented at a single grade level. For example, at the end of Series I, the average first-grade child reads on a high third-grade level. He can spell 385 words. At the end of Series III, he will read on a sixth grade level.

IV. THE ADVANTAGES OF PROGRAMMED READING

1. It represents a scientific approach to reading by combining the disciplines of linguistics, psychology and programming.

2. It allows the child who is capable and interested to proceed at his own rate.
3. One of the chief merits of the program is that it specifies each step in teaching so that it can be thoroughly pretested and then revised and standardized in the form that proves best.
4. The program, according to its proponents, offers a guarantee of success to teacher, parent and child. There are no non-readers in the sense that each child demonstrates at least a modicum of achievement.
5. In this child-oriented program, the student learns to spell every word that he reads. This provides confidence for the attacking of new words.
6. The books themselves actually do most of the teaching. Thus the teacher is freed from the task of presenting routine material and may function effectively for individualized instruction.
7. Programmed Reading is truly individualized. Each child learns at his own pace, proceeding as rapidly as his achievement permits. Even the slowest child learns to read to a degree in his first year. Faster children cover five or more years of work. No child is ever held back by the group.
8. This reading series actually represents children's interests -- not just someone's idea of what children might be interested in.
9. Spelling and punctuation are integral parts of the program. Children learn to write and punctuate sentences as they learn to read.
10. Other curriculum areas, such as social studies, science, and literature, are also fundamental parts of the reading program.
11. Sick children or transfer students are able to begin immediately at their own level. There is no way for them to fall behind the group.
12. Since she works with each student individually, the teacher learns every child's problems.
13. The child makes hundreds of written responses to every book. He also takes in-book tests, seven-page end-of-book tests, and fifteen-page final examinations. Thus the children are tested much more frequently and thoroughly. Since the tests are "fun", the children look forward to them.

14. In terms of traditional tests, the average first-grade child usually reaches a third-grade level. Many reach a fifth-grade level. The average third-grade child reaches a sixth-grade level. The tests are based on a basal vocabulary and thus are not intended specifically for the Programmed Reading approach.

V. THE DISADVANTAGES OF THE METHOD

1. The program fosters an impersonal relationship to which some children do not react well.
2. Attitudes, reasoning powers, and creative responses are not fostered by this method.
3. The Programmed Reading approach represents a complete break with traditional methods of teaching of reading. As a consequence, the teacher must be prepared to assume the role of a flexible tutor. Some teachers find it difficult to adapt to such a radical change in their role.
4. Because of the thorough linguistic training at the beginning of the program, the children seem to make a slower start. It takes them longer to get to their first hard-cover reader. Parents who see other first graders bringing home hard-cover readers think that their children are somehow falling behind in reading.

VI. IN MY OPINION --

I should like to make it clear that the disadvantages which I cited are those which might trouble a first, second, or third grade teacher in her first year of using the program. I myself have experienced only success in using these materials.

Note: This article describes one example of the programmed reading method and materials, namely the Sullivan Programmed Reading Materials, rather than the programmed reading approach in general.

THE INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH TO READING

by

Miss Margaret Jean Raeburn

THE INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH TO READING

Miss Margaret Jean Raeburn

I. THE METHOD

The individualized approach to reading is one which encourages each child to develop to his maximum without hindering others to reach their maximum. It is an approach which is tailored to the needs of individuals and involves self-selection of material, basal readers, phonetic training and group work. It is a multi-approach to reading and is carried on largely with individuals rather than groups.

II. A DISCUSSION OF THE METHOD

In the individualized approach to reading each child reads each day. As a first grader he may start actual "book reading" on the first day of school. He selects his own material with greater guidance at first than is necessary later on. In addition to reading individually with his teacher he is also part of an ever changing group or groups which may work specifically on sight vocabulary, phonetic skills, comprehension or oral expression.

While he may receive some phonetic training, the reading time is usually free from formalized reading instruction. Notation is made of areas where specific instruction is needed, but the actual reading is not disturbed and difficult words are told to the child. Phonetic instruction follows, usually with a group having similar needs.

In first grade the child begins by reading alone and as he develops some skill and confidence he is joined by one or two others. At times all read aloud simultaneously from different books without disturbing each other. Or two may read silently while one reads orally. The teacher, of course, must be familiar with the reading material and able to listen to this number of children at the same time.

This type of program also calls for independent activities on the part of the rest of the class. They must be gainfully occupied, not "quietly busy", while a few of their classmates read. Their activities include writing, independent work in arithmetic, reading workbooks (not related to specific reading books), creative work in art, number and word games, independent reading and experimentation in science. The classroom then is one where a busy hum may be heard. It is never silent during a work period, but not noisy enough to disturb others. The atmosphere is permissive, but never chaotic. Materials must be numerous

and cover a wide range of interests and ability. In this way children read a quantity of books during their first grade year and also do much creative writing.

III. THE GOOD POINTS OF THE METHOD

The good points of this approach to reading include the development of the child's attitude and love for reading, the development of individual interests and ability to choose material, and the opportunity for each child to feel adequate as a reader without the stigma of group pressure. This includes advancement for the capable child and slower pacing for the slower learner through a variety of material as opposed to plodding through a designated, uniform course of study.

IV. WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE METHOD

The drawbacks to this method are usually large classes, insufficient reading material, and teacher or administrative attitude.

V. AN EVALUATION OF THE METHOD

Statistics and research on this method of teaching reading are inconclusive. In actual reading achievement the difference between the basal and individualized method is negligible. To date, however, there do not appear to be any studies which measure interest or attitude toward reading.

VI. IN MY OPINION --

The individualized approach to the teaching of reading is the best way to teach reading. I believe this because the program is tailored to meet individual needs. No attempt is made to tailor the individual to the program. In this approach the method differs with individuals, and children find reading an enjoyable and stimulating experience. As far as numbers are concerned, I have had successful individualized programs with classes ranging in size from 18 to 30. The child feels success in this program because he reads material which is of interest to him. In practice, the "individualized approach" to reading is taking every approach to reading and teaching the child by the method which is most successful and rewarding for him.

READING READINESS

by

Miss Valencia E. Ackerson

READING READINESS

Miss Valencia E. Ackerson

I. OVERVIEW

Reading Readiness is the state of being ready for reading. It occurs when a child's maturation process reaches that point in his development at which written symbols take on real meaning. This realization brings a desire to know more and more about the ever widening horizon which is unfolding each day as he learns the meaning and configuration of words.

Reading Readiness must, by definition, take place some time before the child is ready to read.

The Minneapolis Curriculum Guides offer teachers in kindergarten and primary grades a wealth of ideas and guidance in teaching during the years when reading readiness asserts itself. Some of the Guides offered to teachers are:

1. "Reading Readiness in the Kindergarten and First Grade."
2. "An Overview of the Elementary School Curriculum."
3. "Independent Activities for First Grade."
4. "Guide to Reading in the Elementary School."
5. "Getting Acquainted with Your Elementary School." (For new teachers)

Some of the pamphlets offered to parents include the following:

1. "Parent and Child Prepare for School."
2. "Kindergarten For Your Child."
3. "Your Child is Growing Up With Reading."
4. "Your Child Wants To Be An Independent Reader."

II. WHAT THE KINDERGARTEN CONTRIBUTES TO THE READINESS PROGRAM

"Foundations for all Learning"

"One of the most important foundations for all learning is the child's feeling about himself, and good feelings about self in relation to others. Such feelings of

confidence and security promote an eagerness to try, an openness to experience and a zest for exploring the unknown." (quote from "Kindergarten For Your Child")

The Minneapolis Schools believe in the education of the whole child. This program urges the teacher to take the child where he is, and with all her skill, interest and experience, help him progress at his own rate of learning through the grades.

The kindergarten year is probably one of the most important years of a child's life. The program is prepared to aid the child in adjusting to life situations. Beside the broad base of kindergarten play activities which are of utmost importance to learning, the kindergarten year deals with specifics also.

Perhaps a quick overview of some activities will give the reader some insight into the nature of the readiness program in the kindergarten.

1. "Attaching Language Symbols to Experiences."
2. Participating in situations that "Require Critical Listening and Thinking."
3. "Experiencing Left to Right Orientation."
4. "Developing Awareness of the Role of Reading."
5. "Recognizing Symbols" (from "Kindergarten for Your Child")

In addition, there are the Writing Foundation Learnings. Some of these include:

1. "Expressing Ideas."
2. "Developing Awareness of the Role of Writing."
3. "Developing Awareness of the Use of Writing."
4. "Writing His Name" (from "Kindergarten for Your Child")

Mathematics Foundation Learnings, too, are showing added importance in the light of the new mathematics program. Social studies, science, and music play a part in the readiness program.

III. THE ROLE OF THE FIRST GRADE IN THE READINESS PROGRAM

Most children starting first grade are eager to begin reading in books. This seems to affirm a natural-born longing for the child to become wholly articulate.

Some children, however, do not as yet have this readiness for reading. The first grade teacher, through guidance in reading foundations, will build up an awareness of the joy which reading will bring.

The period of Beginning to Read will be developed in the first grade as follows:

- Foundations for reading
- Developmental program
- Reading in the content area
- Literary appreciation
- Personal reading program (from "Guide to Teaching Reading in the Elementary School", Minneapolis Public Schools)

Teachers at this level are concerned with making a child feel at home with reading. Frustrations resulting from being pushed into the basic reading program too soon create a distaste for books which is almost impossible to overcome.

Ninety per cent of the success in reading comes through the child's own interest and readiness to respond.

Success in reading activities begets added response as the reading material becomes more and more difficult.

The first grade is most important to the reading program. Parents seem to recognize this fact and are usually ready to assist the school in planning home activities to further the readiness program.

IV. THE ROLE OF THE HOME IN THE READING READINESS PROGRAM

Here are some of the guidelines for parents who are concerned with the success of a child's reading ability:

- Let your child grow up with reading.
- Make books important to him and to the family.
- Read to him often.
- Provide quiet periods for reading pleasure.
- Allow him times to express his ideas freely at family gatherings.
- Insist that others listen to him and that he listens to others.
- Confer with his teacher if reading problems appear.
- Provide periodic checkups for physical well-being.
- Remember -- Confidence in your child is a prerequisite to success.

Finally --

These prereading years do not end the reading readiness program for the child. Indeed, readiness activities extend throughout a child's school life. Present activities become readiness for future activities. These activities alert a child to the possibilities of discovery through reading.

Each teacher watches the child go on to new endeavors knowing full well that she has not finished the process, but that each succeeding teacher will take up where she left off in this exciting adventure of teaching a child to read.

PARENT READINESS

by

Mrs. Joyce H. Madson

PARENT READINESS

Mrs. Joyce Madson

The words "Parent Readiness" in our context can mean many things. First, readiness to be parents. This is in itself an all inclusive statement. We will assume that all parents in the following discussion are happy to be parents and eager to do all that is in their power to understand the stages of growth of their children, including the physical and mental limits of their pre-school youngsters.

It has been said that preparing for school begins in the bassinet. An infant -- born without the ability to lift his head -- learns to sit up, crawl, walk, recognize people, play, talk, laugh, love, and listen. Some of these are brought about simply by passage of time, but others are developed by the child's experiences in a world first bounded by parents' arms. Gradually this world expands until it is time for school, itself a widening world.

Your baby is born into a specific, unique set of relationships. As he begins to play a part in these relationships, he becomes aware of himself. He learns expression of attitudes toward him in this family setting. He begins to get an idea of what kind of a person the other most important people in his life consider him to be. He absorbs the emotional climate of your home.

As he grows into a pre-school child, you will discover that one of the most important functions of a parent is setting limits on his behavior. It is one of the more complex activities of parenthood, and requires patience and persistence. To teach your child the rights of individuals, and to protect him from dangers, it is necessary to place limits on his behavior. Limits play an important part in developing his self-esteem and confidence. He needs to know that he is not at the mercy of every impulse he feels, but is able to control his demands on himself and others. Children are not automatically and naturally obedient. They need to learn your limits long before they understand your explanations.

Crossing the street is a good example of ever-changing limits as the child's capacities to comply increase. A baby is carried. A small child walks with a parent holding his hand. A 5-year old walks along beside his parents. A 6-year old crosses the streets by himself, but within the rules he has learned for safe crossing.

Your patient work in establishing controls helps your child to meet new experiences, such as learning to play with other children, going to school, and following the rules of the classroom, successfully.

Another most important function and responsibility of parents is the physical health and good health habits of our children, thus enabling them to be as ready as possible for school.

Every child should have a pre-school health examination. Height, weight, posture, vision, and hearing should be carefully checked. Dental examination just before school should be included, along with all the necessary immunizations and a record of the communicable diseases he has had.

Quoting Dr. Donald Durrell in his article "Learning To Read", Sept., 1964, Atlantic: In phonics "his (the child's) first need is ear training." Educators in the field of reading recognize the importance of the child's ability to see and hear correctly in order to work up to the best of his ability in learning to read and to understand what he reads. Does it not follow, then, that it is most important to check the vision and hearing carefully and with regularity? An otolaryngologist stated, after discovering a hearing loss in my six-year old son, that mumps causes more damage to hearing through nerve damage than any other disease in children.

Many vision and hearing defects can be corrected or helped dramatically if discovered in time.

The Pre-School Medical Survey of Vision and Hearing, a non-profit public service organization sponsored by the Minnesota State Medical Association, has been offering this service throughout the state of Minnesota since 1961. Volunteer groups do the screening. Medical Auxiliary Women's Clubs, P.T.A.'s, Mrs. J.C.'s all have been doing the screening of the four-year old. Local school people are becoming increasingly aware of the volunteer screening of the four-year old. These programs not only provide a valuable file of information on particular children having handicaps (the records kept by the follow-up chairman are transmitted to the schools when the children concerned enter kindergarten), but the whole community is exposed to the parent information.

The "why" of pre-school screening. In a child's development, certain vision and hearing defects are more successfully treated if discovered at an early age. A small child cannot tell you whether he sees or hears normally, but a pre-school screening will. The early recognition of eye problems is important as vision development ends at age seven. Therefore it is often too late for satisfactory treatment if serious eye problems are found when children start school. The pre-school screening is the ounce of prevention. Simple hearing problems, which respond to prompt medical treatment, may progress if neglected into an actual hearing handicap which may not yield to treatment. There are helps for a child with a hearing handicap which are most successful if started early. Children with an unrecognized handicap are often left out of social play, lose self-confidence, or feel inadequate or insecure.

The volunteers in Minneapolis are trained under the direction of the Pre-School Medical Survey of Vision and Hearing. The "screening test" is NOT an examination, but discovers those children in urgent need of medical examination; and it counsels parents to seek medical

advice during those early years which are most favorable for treatment. The screening test for hearing defects which uses words and pictures familiar to four-year olds is available for the use of volunteers. The vision test is based on the well-known Snellen E. Smith tests and have the approval of medical authorities.

It is apparent that preschool development of our children is a grave responsibility of parents. We, as parents, are aware of our children's needs, physically and emotionally, and understand the best ways to help them prepare for school and learning.

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PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE TEACHING OF READING
TO THE CULTURALLY-DISADVANTAGED, THE MENTALLY RETARDED
AND THE BRAIN-INJURED CHILD

by

Mrs. Violet Tupper

PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE TEACHING OF READING TO
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Mrs. Violet Tupper

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading has been unique since early times. Greeks and Romans used the A. B. C. method. In the 1870's reading began to change. Children wanted to know why they learned to read. We need to consider reading as a sequential program into the secondary schools. In the 1920's, three out of every hundred attended high school. In the 1940's, thirty out of every hundred attended high school. Today seventy of every hundred attend high school. This change is "man's rising aspiration all over the world." Reading is not grade level.

Every child cannot read the same book in a classroom. We have to learn this. We must implement this if every child is going to grow up to the measure of his ability. When a child learns to read, we must remember:

1. Every student can improve in rate and comprehension.
2. Every child can improve only when materials are suited to him.
3. There is a tremendous range in reading ability.
4. We must read to think before we read for fun -- or we forfeit reading for scholarship.
5. We are afraid to let the public know what reading problems there are.
6. We do not have many average people in any class.
7. Learning proceeds better when there is success.
8. Reading is a tool -- it is not a subject.
9. Reading has no subject matter. No grades should be given -- only progress reports.

(The above points are paraphrased from Dorothy Andrews, reading specialist from Connecticut.)

In considering the brain-damaged and the culturally disadvantaged child, Sarah P. Holbrook, a Minneapolis school psychologist says, "Children in these categories sometimes have reading difficulties because, for various reasons, they are not receptive to learning. The problems of teaching reading to these children are greatly complicated by their lack of motivation toward learning. Needed are a variety of materials, an array of different techniques for use when the usual ones fail, and experimentation in motivating devices."

Miss Holbrook finds it "hard to talk in terms of problems related to groups. Among these groups there are many who learn well; those who do not will need individual study by teachers and others to find techniques that work."

II. TEACHING OF READING TO THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

Mable Melby, Consultant in Curriculum for the Minneapolis Schools, discusses the problem for our committee by saying,

In part, the difficulty that these children may experience in learning to read stems from the fact that they tend to have limited experience background as revealed by limited concept development, meager vocabulary, and perceptual deprivation. If reading is the process of getting meaning from the printed page, this "taking meaning from" is dependent upon "bringing meaning to" the printed page.

In part, the difficulty may stem from the fact that these children tend to reveal a slower development in language patterning, e.g., the language patterns of the seven and eight year olds may be similar to the language patterns of the five and six year olds of the more culturally advantaged population. In spite of the difference, these children tend to be placed in "learning-to-read" situations at about the same age as the verbally mature children. As a result, progress for these children may be slow. This early lack of success may become a block to further efforts and continued application.

In part, the difficulty may stem from the fact that these children in grades four, five, and six tend to be placed in reading situations beyond their operational level, particularly in the content areas. Any success in the developmental reading program can be easily negated through presence of frustration in other reading activities.

In part, the difficulty may stem from a value system in the home and neighborhood that does not place

reading high on the list as a favored activity nor reading ability as a prized possession. Many of these difficulties, however, can be overcome with adequate pacing and spacing of the instructional program; by including provisions for success and satisfaction through reading; by providing experiences for developing concepts, vocabulary, and precepts.

The Youth Development Project at Grant School is developing a language-experience approach.

Mrs. Mary Jane Higley reports one "cannot look at reading in isolation. Language development as a whole must be considered. The culturally disadvantaged child lacks ability in oral expression. The reading program must first focus on oral expression and listening." (Television, spectator sports and background music are three examples.)

"A teacher cannot isolate the teaching of reading. The content areas and the total classroom experience should be considered." (One group walked to the playground, dug snow and found something in it. The group wrote a story about it. The purpose for a field trip is narrowed for the culturally deprived. A second trip to the same place for another reason enriches the experience.)

"These youngsters in the Youth Development Project are not taken out of the self-contained classroom. They are trained to observe and talk about what they see. They need thorough preparation and review." (For example, the resource teachers may take a picture with a Polaroid camera of some activity. The children see the results in sixty seconds. They may take a group to a laundromat, do a load of washing and then return to school for conversation.)

"The resource teachers are building more pictures and materials for racial groups into the program to show different neighborhoods, multiple dwellings and different types of apartment houses. Some classroom teachers will prepare their own simple materials. Reading readiness should take place at later levels for these children who lack experience in language and oral expression." (Part of the above is paraphrased from an interview with Mrs. Higby. The compiler of this report takes responsibility for any mistakes in interpretation.)

A. Harry Passow is the editor of a book called Education in Depressed Areas. On page 2 in the chapter on schools, we find the following statement: "Although the differences among culturally disadvantaged children tend to invalidate stereotypes, certain characteristics are frequent enough to trouble the schools. Generally, these schools have higher than normal rates of scholastic failure, truancy disciplinary problems, dropouts, pupil transiency, and teacher turnover. Poor health, inadequate motivation, malnutrition, lack of personal cleanliness, absence of

basic learning skills -- all are found to a greater extent among children in depressed urban areas than among students in other parts of the city or in the suburbs."

III. THE BRAIN-DAMAGED AND MENTALLY RETARDED CHILD

"A major stumbling block to the doubly handicapped appears to be the inability to comprehend and to synthesize their thinking, so that they are handicapped in making social adjustments, and the degree to which they can attain even basic academic proficiency is reduced. Perhaps, then, an increase in reading speed would enable them to gain better comprehension and thus cope somewhat more effectively with the environment." (Sarah A. Shafer. "Speed Reading", The American Teacher.)

Evelyn D. Deno, Consultant in Special Education and Rehabilitation for the Minneapolis Public Schools, suggests the difficulty in summarizing such complex problems in a brief report. Dr. Deno reports:

Due in part to the manner of assignment of pupils to special classes in the Minneapolis Schools (i.e. they are placed on special only when they can't achieve in regular) and the predominant tendency of the standard curriculum to be heavily dependent upon education via the route of verbal-conceptual learning, our special class pupils (retarded) are, on the average, much poorer in reading than one would expect them to be on the basis of their IQ scores.

The methods of the standard educational program are built upon a skill hierarchy which has ability to read at its base. Research work which we have done on our special class population through our Project 681 shows that their difficulties in reading are more instrumental in their special class placement than their IQ's per se. In many cases specific learning disability in reading appears to be more a "cause" of their "retardation" (i.e. poor school performance) than retardation is a "cause" of their reading problems.

In this respect, and probably in many other ways also, many of the "retarded" are more like the "brain-damaged" than they are like the "garden variety," "just the same as, but slower" retarded learner stereotype which we carry around in our heads. They have special visuo-motor dysfunction, deficiency in aural and visual input of stimulation, difficulties in decoding of input coming in through different sensory channels and, perhaps, difficulties in expressing concepts verbally even though they may have no comparable problem in action at the performance level. Some retarded do well

on the "mechanical skill" aspects of reading but their retardation shows up in their understanding of what they have read. To whatever extent it is possible to improve their understanding this improvement may come as much from enrichment of their experience and thereby their basic concepts as from effort spent on the "reading" per se.

This being the case, a teacher who expects to teach reading to retarded and "brain-damaged children" (whatever that is) must, in my opinion, have a wide repertoire of approaches to the teaching of reading at her command because all of the research has not resulted in being able to say which child can be expected to learn best by a particular method. Reading behavior is too complex to make such a prediction in the present state of our knowledge. Multisensory approaches such as the Fernald method seem to help some who previously seemed not able to learn. Programmed reading seems to be very good for some, Hegge's remedial reading drills for others, individually tailored materials based on findings of such diagnostic instruments as the I.T.P.A. (Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities) for others.

The research evidence accumulated through such studies as our own Kenny School Neurology Project confirms that one can no more generalize about the "brain-damaged" than one can generalize about the retarded. For every neurologically impaired child who has a reading disability there are probably at least a hundred who don't, and no generalization can be made about those who are disabled. In most cases, the label which gets pinned on a child seems to be as much a matter of which educational administrative door or which doctor's door he happened to pass through as what specific symptoms he showed or what his reading tendencies were.

To me these facts suggest that we should pay attention to the problem of managing the child's learning. By that I mean, specifically, that the evidence indicates that, in the present state of our knowledge of how to teach reading, some children are not likely to be able to learn in a group situation. Some seem to take hold only under conditions of a one-to-one relationship, others can get it in smaller groups, but I don't believe it is possible for one teacher in a self-contained classroom to meet the skill learning needs of all beginning readers. We need to provide a variety of alternatives to meet individual needs.

There is mounting evidence that children having a high probability of turning out to be reading failures can

be identified early in their school careers before they ever tackle the task. Evidence mounts that we can get more mileage for the time and money spent (and certainly a happier child!) if we get to these children with appropriate procedures before they have piled failure on failure and become emotionally crippled thereby. I can see no professional justification for setting a policy which requires that a child be two years below his grade level in reading before reaching out a helping hand.

The December, 1964, issue of the magazine named Exceptional Children bears out Dr. Deno's excellent summary. There is a great variety of specialists in the field of learning disorders. Much has been done in recent years, but the problem is so complex that the general public needs to make a "sustained effort to reduce the impressive amount of ignorance that still remains." (page 165)

James J. Gallagher from the University of Illinois sums it up in the issue by saying, "The great strength in the area of exceptional children is the ability to draw on the special knowledge of areas ranging from neurology to pediatrics, and from experimental sociology to special education. Through this breadth of interest, we are better able to see the problem in all its proper proportions."

There are other types of exceptional children whose learning difficulties are not due to mental retardation, deafness, motor impairment, blindness or faulty instruction. "The children who do have special learning disabilities might be described by some clinicians as educationally retarded, autistic, dyslexic, perceptually handicapped, minimally brain-injured, emotionally disturbed, neurologically disorganized, dysgraphic aphasic interjacent, or word-blind." (Barbara Bateman, "Learning Disabilities -- Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow", Exceptional Children, December, 1964, page 167)

One can readily understand what the reading teacher faces when these children may need psychotherapy, drugs, phonic drills, speech correction, tracing, crawling, bead stringing, trampoline exercises, orthoptic training, auditory discrimination drills and controlled diet."

We would expect the mentally retarded child to be rather consistent in achieving a poor academic record. The brain-injured child is different. He may be able to read but not able to succeed in arithmetic. He may be able to take part in a conversation but have difficulty in reasoning. The reading teacher and the parent must keep these inconsistencies in mind.

The writings of Erickson and Havighurst describe the developmental tasks of early and middle childhood, adolescence and adult life.

"Learning a sense of trust in others, learning social and physical realities, building a wholesome attitude toward one's self, and developing a clear sense of identity are a few of the tasks to be mastered for successful ascension up the ladder of life." (Exceptional Children, December, 1964, page 208)

How complicated it must be for the teacher to build for success on the primary level. It is often a primitive level. The teacher needs to communicate complete acceptance of the child, and to establish order without becoming too rigid in tasks set for the brain-damaged and the mentally retarded child. We need to understand that each "culturally deprived" and brain-damaged youngster is an individual. It may take a pediatrician, psychologist, teacher and many other experts to discover what a child needs.

Consider, for example, the problem involved in discovering the specific areas of reading difficulty. Cruickshank's book gives us the following list of questions just to begin to find the reason for a reading problem:

"The Teaching Method"

If a child has difficulty in reading, there must be a reason:

1. Can the child sort colors into groups?
2. Does he know the names of colors?
3. Can he sort forms?
4. Does he associate meaning with forms (round ball)?
5. Does he know the names of forms?
6. Can he reproduce a pattern from a model?
7. Can he sort letters described earlier?
8. Can he match pictures?
9. Can he match words to words?
10. Can he match pictures with letter, sound and word?
11. Can he speak clearly and understandably?
12. Can he imitate sounds?
13. Can he repeat a sentence after you?
14. Can he pick out the beginning and ending sounds?

"Language Development"

1. Can he answer questions?
2. Does he seem to understand what is said to him?
3. Does he have an adequate basic vocabulary (Dolch cards)?
4. Can he key to a subject or does he wander to irrelevant topics?
5. Is his language satisfactory for his age level?

The answers to the above questions may provide aid in finding the beginning point. (Cruickshank, W. M., A Teaching Method for Brain-injured and Hyperactive Children, page 234 ff.)

IV. CONCLUSION

In considering the multiplicity of problems, it is a wonder some children learn to read at all. Reading is the only thing we expect all children to do well. We cannot all do the high jump or bake a cake with equal skill. Yet, we expect a first-grader to read on the first-grade level, whatever that means. But, reading is not a subject. It is a skill. Ability, motivation, health and environment are important factors.

Problem readers, whatever the cause, may or may not learn to read. Some will respond to private tutoring; others may learn to read in small groups and some may learn to read in an average-size classroom. It is my opinion that it is the task of the schools to help each child develop "personally, socially, economically and civically."

There are no clearly defined rules. Passow concludes the "outlook is both discouraging and hopeful. It is discouraging in terms of size, complexity, bitterness, and the human cost involved. The outlook is hopeful in the forces which are being mobilized to dissect and resolve this wasteful, destructive problem of displaced citizens in a rejecting or ignoring homeland. The ideal is clear, the directions well marked; now, the initial steps must be taken so that Americans all can move ahead toward the fullest realization of each individual's potential." (Education in Depressed Areas, page 351).

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See also: Educational Journals

Special appreciation to: Dr. Evelyn Deno, Mable Melby, Dr. Sarah Holbrook and Mrs. M. J. Higby.

REMEDIAL READING IN THE MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by

Mrs. Kathryn B. Gehring

REMEDIAL READING IN THE MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mrs. Kathryn B. Gehring

The importance of remedial reading instruction has grown apace with our society's increasing need for academic achievement. There are a number of questions which a lay group can and should ask regarding this aspect of a school system's reading instruction in order to appraise the effectiveness of the total reading program.

1. What proportion of the total number of students who are not reading adequately receive help?

Some estimate of the extent of reading retardation can be made from the statement from the Minneapolis School Report, April, 1961, p. 3, that, "In one junior high school in which the median IQ is close to the city median, 20% of the entering seventh grade students who have IQ's above 90, are two or more years retarded in reading." (It must be remembered that intelligence scores are influenced by poor reading ability, particularly in group intelligence tests, so that the actual percentage is undoubtedly higher than 20%.) Children below the level of an IQ score of 90 can also be taught to read. This figure does not give any indication of the number of children with superior ability who are not reading at a level commensurate with their ability, although they may be reading at their grade level.

There were 39,155 children enrolled at the elementary level in the Minneapolis Public schools as of June, 1965. Of these, 468 children were, or had been, enrolled in remedial reading centers in 1965. Approximately 51 children with special learning disabilities received private reading instruction while most of the other children in the SLD program attending public schools received additional instruction from building resource teachers or SLD teachers -- around 60 students on the elementary level. (The figures here are inexact because separate figures for the SLD program at the elementary and secondary level are not available.) Dr. Deno, who is in charge of the SLD program, has indicated that most of the children in the program enter it because of reading problems.

At the secondary level, data reported by 12 of the 16 junior high schools in Minneapolis which involves 10,471 students, show that 558 of the students were receiving remedial instruction or developmental reading help in the spring semester of 1965. Another 204 students had been enrolled in Reading Center classes in the fall semester but not the spring semester.

One concrete indication that more children should be in remedial reading classes in the Minneapolis school system is the

fact that at Grant Elementary Reading Center, which had a total enrollment of 33 pupils in the 1964-1965 year, "The over-view for next year shows 182 prospective candidates for the center. This does not include carry-overs from this year (Appendix I, No. 9)."

2. How are these facilities dispersed geographically?

"Two junior high schools do not have reading centers -- Anthony and Folwell. The latter has trained help but carries on its program through a team of several teachers who help one another and extend reading improvement to more pupils." (Appendix II, John Maxwell, p. 1)

At the elementary level, Braemar, Adams, Bancroft, Barton, Burroughs, Calhoun, Ericsson, Grant, Hamilton, Holland, Howe, Marcy, Monroe, Pillsbury and Whittier have reading centers which serve four to six of the surrounding schools. The distance that some children walk for remedial instruction is a problem as evidenced by such statements as these from the comments of reading center teachers:

"Some children are in need of transportation."

"Poor attendance due to long distance in cold weather."

And on another child, "Attended only a few months."

Mother felt his poor health did not permit his walking so far. Released."

"Attendance was very irregular because of distance."

(Appendix I, Annual Report on Reading Centers 1964-1965)

Only 21 pupils of the 478 pupils enrolled in Reading Centers received tokens from the Board of Education and 9 of these were from Whittier. (Table 1)

3. Are the Minneapolis schools oriented toward a policy of early remediation of reading problems?

The data from Elementary Reading Centers shows the following distribution of pupils by grade:

Second	5
Third	48
Fourth	139
Fifth	161
Sixth	115

(Table 1)

At the secondary level:

Seventh	526
Eighth	166
Ninth	82

"Inference: Reading Center help is concentrated at the seventh grade, reflecting the desire of reading teachers to

get at reading problems early."
(Appendix II)

Comments of the Reading Center teachers at the junior high level indicated a desire to increase remedial instruction at the elementary level.

One of the obvious problems arises in scheduling remedial or developmental reading instruction in a lock-step system of education. In 8 of the junior high schools that reported, reading instruction is taken in place of English classes or sometimes social studies; in 2 schools it is taken in addition to the English classes; in 1 it is taken in lieu of English but receives no grade in English; and in 1 it is taken in place of art or science.

Many children with reading problems also have difficulty with language expression and thus with English so that it would seem particularly unfortunate for such a child to miss an English class.

Perhaps the innovations of B. Frank Brown in the Melbourne, Florida, schools should be studied (An Answer to Dropouts; the Nongraded High School, Atlantic, November, 1964, pp. 86-90). In his plan for phased learning,

"The curriculum of each student is linked to his personal achievement rather than to his chronological age, as is customary in the graded school.

Any discussion of changes in the curriculum must eventually come to the point of what is being done about reading. This is the central intellectual obligation of the educated person and the most important subject in the curriculum, yet educators are unable to agree upon how it should be taught.

When students are phased instead of graded, those who do not read competently are scheduled for two or more hours a day in a reading laboratory. Here an intensive effort is made to increase reading efficiency."

In a nongraded high school, no courses would have to be missed in order to receive extra reading instruction.

The Minneapolis system's policy on age of remediation is typical of the nearly 1,000 United States school systems reported in the Harvard report on reading, but the policy of delaying reading help until the third or fourth grade has evoked strong criticism from the authors of this report (Austin and Morrison, 1963)¹ and many authorities concerned with reading disability (Money, 1962)². Not only is early reading help necessary to prevent secondary emotional involvement but, "From everything we know about children, we would expect that success in a program of remedial reading would be the greater, the earlier the child's deficits were detected and corrective measures instituted (Money, 1962, p. 4)."

4. What weight is given to IQ scores in selecting students for help in the Reading Centers?

Caveats by such authorities as L. J. Brueckner and Guy Bond in "The Diagnosis and Treatment of Learning Difficulties", 1955, have focused attention on the policy of limiting help for poor readers on the basis of intelligence tests, especially group intelligence tests. These authors have said, "If teachers are to use present intelligence tests properly, they must realize that a low score on a group intelligence test which involves reading is not a true test if the child is a poor reader.... Even the scores on individual tests of intelligence, such as the Stanford-Binet are influenced to some degree by poor reading ability....[and this effect]tends to increase as the difference between mental age and reading age of the poor reader increases (pp. 33-34)."

Even using the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC), "Evidence was found that low scores obtained by children who have reading difficulties frequently reflect their degree of retardation rather than their basic capacity to learn" according to Gilbert Schiffman, Supervisor of Corrective-Remedial Reading, Board of Education of Baltimore County, Maryland (in Money, 1962). One of the Minneapolis Reading Center teachers also remarked, "The course at the University on 'Teaching the Disadvantaged Child' had raised a lot of questions in my mind especially about IQ scores (Appendix I)."

In the Minneapolis Elementary schools, "Children with the greatest difference between mental ability or reading potential and reading achievement are considered first (Appendix III, p. 2)." Table 1 shows that the Elementary Reading Centers had 6 children with IQ's of 80-90; 6 were over 130; and the rest were in the 90-109 range.

At the junior high school level, "In selecting pupils for reading center help, we have attempted to use the criteria of 90IQ or better and two or more years retarded in reading. These criteria are followed

almost always-	2	
usually-	6	
only part of the time-	3	(Appendix II, p. 2)."

5. Are the causative factors of reading retardation being thoroughly evaluated?

Statistics have not been available to determine how many of the children referred to the Reading Centers have been evaluated by the Child Study Department. All of the children in the SLD program "were either tested by our Child Study Department or by some other clinic whose reports were reviewed by the Child Study Department (Appendix IV, p. 3)."

Schiffman has suggested the following list of tests for a complete reading analysis of retarded readers: the usual case history (developmental, social familial), an individual intelligence test, personality evaluation, physical screening, comprehensive reading battery, tests for associative learning, for memory span, for laterality, for perceptual development (Frostig, Bender), for aphasia (Eisenson), and visual and auditory discrimination tests. (These discrimination tests are not the same as the usual acuity tests for vision and hearing which are administered in most schools but they are very important in focusing attention on some of the perceptual problems of poor readers which need special attention.) It is obvious that many of these tests must be administered by trained psychologists.

Dr. Deno has written in reference to the SLD program, "We need more of all of the kinds of professional staff who can work together to help these children with their problems, especially school social workers and school psychologists." (Appendix IV, p. 3) It is quite likely that more of the children requiring remedial reading instruction would qualify for the SLD program and thus for state aid if more evaluation could be made so that reading disabilities would be diagnosed.

Pupils referred to the Reading Centers are supposed to have "adequate" testing of hearing and vision prior to April 1 if they are considered for fall classes, but apparently there must be some slip-up in this requirement judging by one remedial reading center teacher's request for, "---complete eye and ear checks whenever it seems necessary before children are admitted to the reading center... [and] individual ability tests whenever possible before children are enrolled at the reading center (Appendix I)." At the present time, group mental maturity tests are required, not individual tests.

6. How effective is remedial instruction for reading retardation?

This is very difficult to assess with the information available. Part of the effectiveness of the program depends upon adequate testing in order to match special methods and techniques to specific individual requirements, as one reading center teacher noted was done where the kinaesthetic approach was used because it was requested by the University where the child had been tested. A point that has been made by a number of reading clinic directors is typified by Junken in an article on Therapeutic Tutoring for the Intellectually Adequate (1960, April. The Reading Teacher) in which she has stated: "More of this same treatment will not answer. A new approach, different methods---'tailored to individual' needs [are required]... because many come after years of despair and failure, convinced they cannot learn (p. 274)."

However, Austin and Morrison (1963) found that in actual practice in most U. S. school systems the methods and materials did not vary greatly from those in regular classroom reading programs. Is this true in the Minneapolis system? In response to this question about various approaches used in remedial

reading, Dr. Tillman's statements of March 15, 1965, for a CCPE meeting were referred to as a sufficient answer. (Appendix IV, p. 2) He made this breakdown of the approaches used:

- A. Basal Reading - widely used.
- B. On an exploratory basis the system has recently supported work in:
 - 1. Multilevel.
 - 2. Language experience.
 - 3. Words in color.
 - 4. Phonic approach (as in programmed materials of McGraw-Hill).

These various approaches were cited in a discussion of the Minneapolis reading program as a whole. In order to match the right approach to a particular child, the remedial teacher must be trained in a variety of approaches and be willing to use whichever one is best for the individual. In addition, she must have adequate facilities for using that particular approach which is suitable.

7. How can the number of poor readers be reduced?

a. One obvious answer is to expand remedial reading service. However, two major problems inhibit this course of action -- cost and the shortage of qualified reading teachers. The words of John Maxwell, Consultant in Secondary Curriculum, Minneapolis Public Schools, underscore these problems:

"Assuming a \$7400 teacher with 40 pupils per day, the per pupil cost is \$1 per hour for instruction as contrasted with 25¢ per hour in 'regular' classes where the teacher load is 150.

We have been waiting two months to find one reading teacher to help us establish developmental reading centers at North, South, and Central High Schools. Pressure on the critically small supply is increasing because of the impact of federal projects to aid the disadvantaged student. We are quite fearful that this may drain away some of those whom we now are using in reading centers. We are currently drafting a proposal to grant scholarships to classroom teachers to return for certification as remedial teachers. Success in this endeavor may do little more than protect our present level of staff in remedial instruction."

b. The goal of another group of suggestions is improved teaching of reading in the classroom through reduced class size, intensive in-service training, better teaching materials, better teacher preparation in the colleges, additional research on teaching methods, and

greater use of the different methods already available. Cost is also an important factor in a number of these proposals. For example, Don Wahlund has estimated that the cost of reducing the teacher/pupil ratio by one child in the Minneapolis Public Schools would be \$250,000 with the present budget just for grades one through six, excluding all special classes.

These proposals all have merit but they do not solve the problem of the child who needs specialized reading instruction since the classroom teacher is not a reading specialist. It has been repeatedly stressed that different children require different methods of reading instruction and, as Dr. Clymer told our curriculum study group, there is just not enough time in the teachers' undergraduate schedule or curriculum to teach all of the available methods thoroughly. This is true even in the College of Education at the University of Minnesota where the amount of instruction in the teaching of reading is greater than that required in most other colleges of education. For this reason, Professor Clymer said, "We attempt to provide our students with an overview of a number of ways which this [need for different types of instruction] might be approached". Looking at the classroom situation realistically, the teacher has to teach a "composite program and hope that things that are most useful -- this boy or this girl will lean on more directly than others."

The very fact that classroom teachers are not reading specialists means that they can profit from the advice and services of those who are, as indicated in the comment of a remedial reading teacher who said, "In the fall testing period, I feel that I make as great a contribution as possible in two days, by testing as many as twenty children and writing a complete report on each child's reading difficulty for the classroom teacher (Appendix I, #8)."

c. The preventive approach seeks to prepare the child before reading is introduced by overcoming any adverse environmental, physical, or emotional handicaps in the child which might influence reading success. Programs for disadvantaged children furnish one good example of this approach. An important local example of an even broader program of preventive therapy can be found in the Osseo, Minnesota "readiness" rooms where children with unfavorable educational prospects, the "immature" children, receive an additional year of training between kindergarten and first grade which is specifically designed to improve their visual, auditory, and number backgrounds as well as their physical and social development. This program has proved successful enough that one out of eleven children are given this extended training in the belief that it is more worthwhile to add an extra year of schooling before they meet failure than it is to retain them at a later date in elementary school as would probably happen. Alice Tuseth, the Osseo psychologist, has

noted that once children fail, they seem to stay in the bottom group, whereas most of the children from the "readiness" rooms go into the middle or top groups in reading and carry with themselves attitudes of self-confidence, "liking-for-school", and better work habits.

This approach also has a number of important advantages for the classroom teacher with a large class who cannot give individual attention to each child's problems and, where it is handled successfully, it should reduce the requirements for remedial reading instruction which is more expensive than "readiness" rooms such as Osseo's with their class size of 20 taught by kindergarten teachers who received some extra guidance from the reading specialist and psychologist.

REFERENCES

- ¹Austin, M. C. and Morrison, C. The First R: The Harvard Report on Reading in Elementary Schools. MacMillan, New York, 1963.
- ²Money, J. (ed.), Reading Disability: Progress and Research Needs in Dyslexia. Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1962.

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TABLE 1

MINNEAPOLIS ELEMENTARY READING CENTERS

	Braemar	Adams	Bancroft	Barton	Burroughs	Calhoun	Ericsson	Grant	Hamilton	Holland	Howe	Marcy	Monroe	Pillsbury	Whittier	Total
Number enrolled during year	29	34	32	31	29	31	29	33	29	42	28	26	34	34	37	478
Length-6-9 Mos.	23	26	26	20	21	21	28	24	19	23	28	24	19	23	20	
-3-6 Mos.	4	5	1	9	5	6	0	5	10	10	0	0	11	4	11	
Less than 3 Mos.	2	3	5	2	3	4	1	4	0	9	0	2	4	7	6	
No. dismissed before end of yr.	3	5	3	7	5	7	1	8	5	10	2	2	12	4	13	
No. dismissed at end of yr.	14	2	10	14	11	9	28	11	12	13	14	10	9	6	12	
No. needing further help	12	20	17	10	13	15	0	14	12	19	10	14	13	19	12	
Grades represented																
-2nd	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	5
-3rd	0	1	2	5	6	6	0	1	3	7	0	2	7	3	5	48
-4th	13	10	11	9	8	4	10	15	7	10	8	7	8	6	13	139
-5th	12	12	13	11	8	6	14	8	11	12	11	8	8	16	11	161
-6th	4	11	6	6	6	5	5	9	8	9	9	9	11	9	8	115
No. of schools represented at the center	5	4	6	5	4	6	5	6	5	4	5	4	5	5	6	
IQ Range: 80-90	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	6
90-109	22	33	30	25	20	23	19	27		35	16	18	34	20	34	
110-129	7	1	2	4	8	8	7	6		7	11	5	0	13	3	
130+	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0		0	1	0	0	1	0	6
Sex: Boys	26	26	27	21	23	22	23	29	23	34	21	20	30	28	34	387
Girls	3	8	5	10	6	9	6	4	6	8	7	6	4	6	3	91
Transportation:																
Walked	20	31	3	6	11	10	4	23	14	25	19	22	12	18	20	238
Tokens from Bd. of Educ.	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	5	0	9	21
Transported by parents	9	1	20	25	18	21	25	2	7	9	8	4	4	6	8	167
No. of pupils in group:																
One	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	
2-4	4	0	0	3	26	1	18	13	1	6	1	15	9	2	1	
4+	2	34	6	28	0	5	10	17	5	38	5	11	24	4	5	

APPENDIX I

SUGGESTIONS FROM READING CENTER TEACHERS

Contained in the Annual Report on Reading Centers 1964-1965
of the Minneapolis Public Schools

1. "The course at the University on Teaching the Disadvantaged Child had raised a lot of questions in my mind especially about IQ scores."
2. "Many parents continue to say, 'We should have more Reading Centers in our schools'."
3. "Some children are in need of transportation."
4. "...complete eye and ear checks whenever it seems necessary before children are admitted to the reading center...individual ability tests whenever possible before children are enrolled at the reading center."
5. A comment on one pupil: "Poor attendance due to long distance in cold weather." And on another "...Attended only a few months. Mother felt his poor health did not permit his walking so far. Released." Also in the same vein: "Attendance was very irregular because of distance."
6. "Needs eye exam."
7. One request for "a teaching by color kit...perhaps on loan from the central library...for those extreme cases."
8. "Since the competent Reading Consultants have become part of our reading program, there have been fewer calls upon us by the contributing schools. We are called into conference, at noon or by telephone, about children we are teaching at the Reading Center, and about whom the classroom teacher is concerned.

In the fall testing period, I feel that I make as great a contribution as possible in two days, by testing as many as twenty children and writing a complete report on each child's reading difficulty for the classroom teacher."

9. "The over-view for next year shows 182 prospective candidates for the center. This does not include carry-overs from this year."

APPENDIX II

MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DEPARTMENT OF SECONDARY CURRICULUM

Data sent to Mrs. Gehring by John C. Maxwell, Consultant in
Secondary Curriculum

1. Two Junior High Schools do not have reading centers: Anthony and Folwell.¹ The latter has trained help but carries on its program through a team of several teachers who help one another and extend reading improvement to more pupils.

2. Reports were not received from Henry, Phillips, Vocational, or Southwest in time for this report for your committee?

The report is based on figures for these junior high schools:

Bryant	Lincoln	Olson
Franklin	Marshall Jr.-Sr. H.S.	Ramsey
Jefferson	Nokomis	Sanford
Jordan	Northeast	Sheridan

3. Numbers of students enrolled in these schools: 10,471.

4. Number this semester receiving reading help in Reading Centers: 558.

Per school average 46; range from 39 to 99; class size thus averages 9.3 students.

5. Number last semester not now receiving Reading Center help: 204.

(Inference: large numbers of students stay in centers more than one semester.)

6. Grade level of those now receiving Reading Center help:

7th	526	Inference: Reading Center help is concentrated at the 7th grade, reflecting the desire of reading teachers to get at reading problems early.
8th	166	
9th	82	

Note: Some of the schools not reporting (See 2 above) are junior-senior high schools and although they can give some help to students in grades 10-12, most of their effort, too, is concentrated on the junior high school grades.

7. Number of classes labelled as developmental reading: 14
(concentrated in four of the reporting schools)

¹: Folwell now has a reading center - 1966.
2: Limited service is available at Henry, Marshall, and Southwest

N.B. - Informal developmental reading is implied in the junior high school English program. Classes in developmental reading are conceived to teach larger groups (15-30) than the reading center class which is semi-tutorial. Developmental reading classes must, technically, be manned by persons licensed to teach it; licensure is the same as those for remedial reading teachers. Both kinds of teachers are in short supply.

8. No reading classes are supported by Federal Programs at the present time except to the degree that "Special Education" programs for low-ability students are supported. Reading Center programs are designed primarily for students of average ability or better.

9. Responses by principals and reading center teachers indicate that reading needs in buildings are being met:

a. adequately	7
b. more help needed	5
c. quite inadequately	1

In general, those marking the present degree of help "adequate" are in schools of small size (each junior high has only one reading teacher) or in areas of better-than-average socio-economic level. Those marking "more help needed" or "quite inadequate" were generally from schools in which there is a high proportion of low-income families and/or the principal has been particularly active in encouraging development of the reading program.

10. In selecting pupils for reading center help, we have attempted to use the criteria of 90 I.Q. or better and two-or-more years retarded in reading. These criteria are followed

almost always	2
usually	6
only part of the time	3

Other criteria used in selecting students for Center help:

..teacher recommendation	5
..counselor recommendation	4
..willingness, desire to be helped	3
..parental concern	1
..recommendation from Child Study Department	1
..recommendation of school social worker	1
..nonverbal I.Q. scores above 90 even though verbal may be much lower	1
.."cultural" factors (apparently reading need made severe by cultural deprivation, Ed. note.)	1

11. With minor exception, students spend 5 hours per week in the Reading Center.
12. The usual length of time a student spends in Reading Centers:
 - a. all year 7
 - b. 15-30 weeks (varies) 2
 - c. "several weeks" 1
 - d. one semester 2

(Though "all year" is the usual time spent, variations are considerable and reflect the high individualization of the program.)
13. The student leaves the Center when:
 - a. he shows "improvement" in his reading 10
 - b. he wants to leave, feels he is not gaining, or disrupts class 2
 - c. room is needed for new students 2
 - d. agreements among counselor, teacher, pupil 1

(Most schools use multiple reasons for deciding when child should leave the Center.)
14. Reading Center work is taken:
 - a. in place of English class 8 (sometimes social studies)
 - b. in addition to English class 2
 - c. takes it in lieu of English but receives no grade in English 1
 - d. in place of art or science 1
15. All Reading Center teachers except one are certified under regulations of the state. (Note: I have no information on numbers of students taking tutorial work outside of school nor on students handled by such tutors.)

STATE OF MINNESOTA REQUIREMENTS FOR
READING TEACHERS AND READING SUPERVISORS

Type of Position	Teaching Certificate Required	Teaching Experience Required	Degree Required	Courses Required						
				Elem. Reading Methods	Sec. Reading Methods	Remedial Rdg. Methods	Individual Mental Tests	Practicum Diagnosis	Practicum, Remediation	Survey of Exceptional Children
Elementary Remedial Reading Teacher	Elementary	2 years	Bachelor's	x		x	x	x	x	
Secondary Developmental or Remedial Reading Teacher	Elementary or Secondary	2 years	Bachelor's	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Reading Consultant, Supervisor or Coordinator	Elementary or Secondary	3 years, including one as a "reading" teacher	Master's	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

*

Additional courses -- not less than three from the following: language; educational research in reading or educational diagnosis; other learning difficulties, e.g., spelling, arithmetic; mental hygiene and/or personality; advanced psychological testing; principles and procedures in guidance; courses in special education; children's and/or adolescent literature.

APPENDIX III

ELEMENTARY READING CENTERS

The annual report from the reading center teachers for the school year 1964-65 was not available when this report was compiled. The information in this report concerning numbers of children attending the elementary reading centers was for the school year 1963-64. No drastic change in numbers is anticipated for this school year.

1. How many children are presently receiving instruction in separate reading center classes through the Minneapolis Public Schools?

- Number of children who attended elementary reading centers during the 1963-64 school year.....457
- Class size.....range from 1 - 6 pupils in a group

<u>- Location of Reading Center</u>	<u>No. of Schools Represented</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>
Adams	4	32
Bancroft	6	33
Barton	5	30
Bremer	5	34
Burroughs	4	29
Calhoun	6	29
Ericsson	5	22
Grant	6	32
Hamilton	5	34
Holland	4	34
Howe	5	27
Marcy	4	28
Monroe	4	30
Pillsbury	5	31
Whittier	6	40

2. How many children are involved at each grade level?

Grade 3	36
Grade 4	140
Grade 5	168
Grade 6	<u>113</u>
	457

3. What criteria are used in the selection of pupils for these classes?*

*Blueprint for Reading Centers, p. 6.

SCHOOL SURVEY OF DELAYED READERS

Prior to April 1, the home school lists those children in grades 2 through 5 delayed about two or more years in reading in relation to grade placement. These children should have an I.Q. of 90 or above on a group mental maturity test.

When an individual psychological test seems essential to placement, requests should be made by the home school to the Child Study Department.

Prior to April 1, the home school nurse or special service teacher should work with the home room teacher and principal in securing adequate testing of hearing and vision. An audiometer test and an approved vision test are advised.

Prior to June 1, the Preliminary Survey of Remedial Reading Cases (Form #1) should be filled out at the home school. A separate form should be made for each grade. Some selectivity at this time will expedite fall testing. These completed forms are sent to the district Reading Center teacher no later than June 1.

SELECTION OF READING CASES

The Reading Center teacher, the home school teacher, the home school principal and school social worker or special service teacher will go over Form #1, cumulative folders and any other available information and make selections for the initial individual diagnostic testing. All of the referrals on Form #1 may not be tested if the number is too great.

Diagnostic tests are given to those selected children. After studying data gathered from all the separate diagnoses, the Reading Center Teacher makes the final selections and notifies the principals. Children with the greatest difference between mental ability or reading potential and reading achievement are considered first.

4. How many hours of instruction are given each week?

- . Each child receives 45 minutes to 1 hour daily of instruction, either individually or in a small group.

What determines the total length of remediation received?

- . The needs and progress of the individual would determine the amount of help the child would receive. The goal for each child is to help him build independence in skills and develop attitudes toward reading; so that he can continue to make progress in the regular classroom situation.

- Are there any basic differences between the type of reading instruction provided in the reading center and that of the regular classroom?
- . Reading Center instruction has as its purpose the development of attitudes, understandings, and skills needed to provide for the academic, personal, and social growth of a child. The objectives are basically the same as those of the developmental reading program.

Instruction is based upon the needs of the child determined by diagnostic testing. Class groups are organized according to reading disabilities with some consideration for personality needs. Instructional materials and learning aids are varied in appeal and levels of difficulty to meet the range of individual differences in interests and levels of development. Various approaches are used.

5. What are the qualifications necessary for an elementary remedial reading teacher?

- Elementary remedial reading teachers. Requirements:

1. An elementary school teacher's certificate, based on a bachelor's degree.
2. Two years of successful elementary teaching experience.
3. One course in each of the following five areas:

Developmental reading
Diagnosis and correction of reading difficulties
Individual mental testing
Practicum in analysis of reading difficulties
Practicum in correction of reading difficulties

- Are they all certified?

.Yes

- What is the total number?

.Fifteen full-time elementary reading center teachers.

6. Are "listening tables" or other special devices used in any of the reading centers?

.No listening tables are being used.
."Words in Color" is being used experimentally with some of the children at the Burroughs reading center.

7. What proportion of these children receiving reading help are tested by the Child Study Department?

.To obtain the above information it would be necessary to refer to the cumulative records for each of these

457 children. It is estimated that a high percentage of these children have been referred to the Child Study Department.

- Are there any tests required by all children in these reading classes?

PRELIMINARY DIAGNOSIS

- . A conference is held with each child.
- . A diagnostic reading test is given.
- . An informal reading inventory is made to determine independent, instructional, and frustration levels.
- . An interest inventory may be used.

CONTINUING DIAGNOSIS

During the period of instruction at the Reading Center, diagnosis continues through...

- . Observation of daily performance
- . Informal tests
- . Standardized tests

Department of Elementary Curriculum

1. Use a separate sheet for each grade - 2, 3, 4, 5.
2. Children you select to refer for Reading Center services would most likely have percentile rank scores of 30 or less on the most recent standardized reading test and percentile rank scores of 30 or more on the mental maturity test.
3. Send to the district Reading Center Teacher no later than June 1.

School

Grade _____ Date _____

Principal's
Signature[illegible]

APPENDIX IV

C O P Y

MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Administration Building

807 Northeast Broadway Minneapolis 13, Minnesota

Evelyn D. Deno
Consultant in Special Education
and Rehabilitation

April 26, 1965

Mrs. R. L. Gehring
5525 Morgan Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota

I find it hard to answer most of your questions because they seem to imply throughout that the only kind of service involved is special class. This is not true in our program. In our special education program, services for children with special learning disabilities encompasses a continuum of accommodations to individual need which ranges all the way from special instruction on an individual or small group basis given right in the child's home school for the child who can be maintained in enrollment in regular class; instruction in half-day special classes with the child enrolled in regular classes the other half of the day for children who need more help; all day special class; instruction in a group living Center for disturbed children (such as St. Joseph's Home for Children); instruction in the children's psychiatric unit of University Hospital; instruction in the Hennepin County Detention Center; and instruction in the child's home if prescribed by the psychiatrist treating the case.

Because of this mixture we could not answer some of your questions without investing more staff time than we can make available in pretty detailed analysis of our records. On your first question for instance, as of April 1 (the enrollment in this program is a very mobile one - not at all like the retarded, crippled, deaf, etc.) approximately

- 102 children were receiving roughly one hour per day of individual supplementary tutoring
- 52 children (on a daily average) were being served by building resource teachers under the special education program
- 58 children were enrolled in half-day S.L.D.* classes
- 9 children were enrolled in full-day S.L.D. classes
- 21 children were on roll in the psychiatric wards of University Hospital
- 17 children were on roll from St. Joseph's and Oak Park Children's Homes
- 10 children were on roll at the Hennepin County Detention Center
- 12 S.L.D. type pupils were on homebound instruction

*Special Learning Disability

Mrs. Gehring, contd.

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During the 1963-64 school year over 500 different pupils were served in the various S.L.D. program. However, this includes the enrollment at the Hennepin County Detention Center and the Children's Psychiatric Unit at University Hospital where the pupil's stay is relatively short.

It is not possible for me to give you a figure on how many hours of instructional time this would represent because teachers working with groups as resource teachers, hospital teachers, domiciled teachers, etc. vary time according to what it is possible for them to do given the demand at any particular time.

The above program involves the equivalent of approximately 72 full time teachers (assuming five hours of hourly instruction as the equivalent of a full day in the case of teachers who are doing supplementary tutoring on an hourly pay basis).

S.L.D. classes are located at Warrington, Emerson, Holmes, Madison, Phillips, Nokomis, Anthony and Sheridan Schools. Forty-one additional schools receive service from a teacher who comes to the school to work with individuals or small groups.

2.... We would not be able to answer your question on grade levels without devoting more time than we can now give to analyzing our records. For the entire 1963-64 school year the elementary-secondary split was about 50-50.

3.... All children served in S.L.D. programs must be recommended for enrollment by our Child Study Department. If the child had been diagnosed at some other guidance clinic in the community, the Child Study Department might use those findings in rendering their judgement.

Questions 4 and 5 have been answered by Mrs. Mary Ann Murphy of our Elementary Curriculum Department because they appear to refer to reading in general which is not under our department. Her response is as follows:

4.... The report of the March 15, 1965 CCPE meeting adequately reviews various approaches to the teaching of reading. You might refer specifically to Dr. Tillman's statements on page 4 of the report in regard to our Minneapolis reading program.

5.... Attached is a brief description of the listening table as it is viewed in relation to our curriculum. Several tapes have been specifically designed to develop skill in reading. The listening table is currently an exploratory project in eight elementary schools. A presentation will be telecast to Minneapolis classroom teachers on April 26 at 12:00 o'clock on Channel 2.

Mrs. Gehring, contd.

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6.... Certification requirements for teachers in the S.L.D. program vary according to the kind of work they are doing. Teachers doing supplementary tutoring need have only a regular teacher's certificate. (See attached copy of an article written by a member of the State Department of Education.)

Minnesota certification for teachers of emotionally disturbed children requires a special master's degree program which is available in Minnesota only at the University of Minnesota. Nearly all of the teachers we have working with the more seriously disturbed children in special classes, hospital or domiciled centers hold this certification. Eight of our teachers hold this certification. Several others who work with neurologically impaired and/or socially maladjusted children hold other kinds of special education certification (predominantly mentally handicapped and remedial reading); some of these have master's degrees in educational psychology but not in education of the emotionally disturbed. The MA. in emotionally disturbed is not required for all of these teachers.

I would say that by and large the teachers we have working in this program are well trained for the particular jobs they are doing with the exception of a few doing homebound or domiciled instruction. In the latter case this is because the demand arose during the year and there was no "teacher bush" off which fully qualified teachers could be plucked right at the moment they were needed. This should be cleared up at the beginning of the next school year.

7.... All of them were either tested by our Child Study Department or by some other clinic whose reports were reviewed by the Child Study Department.

Report of a medical examination is required to gain entry to S.L.D. service. This is to insure that any physical conditions which may be contributing to the problem have not been overlooked. It would not be quite right to say that entry to the program is contingent on a doctor's statement. The decision involved is an educational one and very few doctors would know enough about the educational alternatives available or what would be realistically possible to be able to write an "educational prescription."

8.... The present amount of service does not fill the need but I don't know that more "classes" is what we need. I think that what we need is resource teachers who can work with the child right in his home building to support him in his regular class attendance and to be a part of the total team working with the child and with his parents to help him in their management of him. We need more of all of the kinds of professional staff who can work together to help these children with their problems, especially school social workers and school psychologists.

Mrs. Gehring, contd.

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I will be gone out of town during the week of April 19.
If I have missed the mark in answering some of these questions,
please feel free to call me. I'll be back on the job April 26.

Cordially,

Evelyn Deno (signed)

Evelyn D. Deno, Consultant
Special Education and Rehabilitation

EDD:hb
Encls.

Tutoring the Handicapped Child

Richard Johnson, Consultant in Special Education
State Department of Education

IN 1957 SPECIAL EDUCATION LAWS were passed which assigned to Minnesota school districts the responsibility of providing special services and instruction for all educable handicapped children.

Of the several ways outlined in the law as methods by which school districts may provide for these children, the full-time special class or resource room has been most frequently used. Districts often find, however, that a full-time special class is not always the answer to the educational needs of all handicapped children nor are there always special classes available — especially in the rural areas. The need for a more individual means of providing special services and instruction in these cases is apparent. A relatively recent and valuable method used to meet this need is one known as supplemental instruction.

What Is Supplemental Instruction?

Supplemental instruction is defined as individual tutoring of a handicapped child in conjunction with his regular class attendance. The basic purpose of supplemental instruction is to enable schools to provide tutorial assistance in the academics so that certain handicapped children may achieve some degree of success in the regular school program. This approach is made possible by a section of the law which provides for "special instruction and services in conjunction with attending regular . . . classes."

In a typical program a hearing-impaired child might attend his assigned regular class for the first two hours of the school day. He would then leave this regular class and be tutored for about an hour on an individual basis in language development, basic skills, etc. He might also be assisted with his regular class work. He would then return to his regular class for the remainder of the day.

How Is It Used?

Supplemental instruction is used where it would be a satisfactory means of assisting some mildly handicapped children. Children with mild vision, hearing, emotional, or neurological handicaps, and certain upper educable mentally retarded children may be able to succeed in a regular class with a limited amount of assistance. For them, a program of supplemental instruction may be more beneficial and appropriate.

Supplemental instruction has also been used sometimes to provide special services in situations where a full-time special class is not immediately available. These situations usually exist where school districts are: 1) faced with temporary lack of space or inability to employ a qualified special education instructor, 2) too small to support a full-time special class, and/or 3) unable, for various reasons, to place their handicapped children in neighboring districts. In these instances supplemental instruction is used as a stop-gap, temporary arrangement to assist districts in providing at least minimum service until a full-scale program becomes available in the area.

Group Instruction

Supplemental instruction has also been used for small groups to provide a modified special class experience for educable mentally retarded children. Under this arrangement, from two to five children of approximately the same age are brought together for two or three hours of small group instruction.

In a typical group supplemental program a number of students would attend regular classes all morning but would come together for small group instruction the first two hours of the afternoon. They would then return to their regular classes for the last hour or two of the school day. This small group program is usually most effective as a booster program for upper educable students who are relatively well accepted in the regular school setting. Usually, this arrangement is a temporary one pending development of a formal special class.

Group supplemental instruction has found its greatest use in helping to extend services to the secondary level. Since 1957 most of the programs established for the educable retarded have been elementary level programs. At the present time secondary classes comprise only about 30 percent of the total number of over 550 classes. Group supplemental instruction can be a valuable means of providing older students in the rural areas with temporary assistance until more adequate services are developed.

Administrative Aspects

Supplemental instruction programs must meet certain requirements established by the State Department of Education. Some of these considerations are:

- 1) Although the teacher must hold a basic certificate to teach in Minnesota, special certification is not required.
- 2) All children served by this method must meet the same eligibility standards that would be required for placement in a formal special education program.
- 3) Each child may be given up to five hours a week of reimbursed individual tutoring.
- 4) Reimbursement for supplemental instruction is computed on the basis of two-thirds of the hourly rate paid to the teacher, with a maximum reimbursement of \$4 per hour.

More specific information may be obtained by writing to the Special Education Section, State Department of Education, Centennial Building, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101.

Summary

In summary, the major goal of supplemental instruction is to give the handicapped child assistance in academic areas so that he may remain in the regular class and achieve as much success as possible. This concept has had many successful types of application during the past two years and will continue to be used to provide programs for handicapped children. ♦

Minneapolis Public Schools
Department of Elementary Education

THE LISTENING TABLE

Physically, the listening table is a primary table that has been equipped with jacks for earphones and a means for connecting the earphones with tape recorders and/or phonographs.

Educationally, the listening table is a means of extending teaching services--another vehicle for providing programmed lessons, for providing stimulation, information, music and/or literature.

Rationale of the Listening Table

There is increasing awareness of the need for individualizing instruction. There is increasing evidence that all children do not learn best through identical means. The listening table could be an advantage to learners who have greater dependence on auditory than on visual stimulation.

Individualizing instruction sometimes requires subgrouping in the classroom. The provision of meaningful activities for some children while the teacher is working with an identified group presents a constant challenge. Often limitations must be placed on the types of activities allowed because of the possibility of distracting influences. Because of the nature of the listening table with its private and individual message, its use provides greater flexibility in types of activities that can be pursued by one group without distracting children engaged in other activities.

The teacher often finds that the demand for her teaching services is extensive. The listening table makes it possible to utilize some lessons that have been prepared in advance of the actual teaching moment, thereby extending the services of the teacher.

Present Use

Presently the listening table is being tried out in eight elementary schools. The oral presentation at the meeting will give examples of these explorations. (This was presented at a Board of Education meeting and will be presented on a noon telecast to teachers on April 26, Channel 2. 12:00-12:15)

Future Possibilities

The listening table, as an instrument, presents various possibilities for use including:

skills

- . the vehicle through which programs are transmitted to the learner

independent activities

- . the voice that provides the content, the suggestions, the choices, and the challenges for independent activities

content areas

- . the source through which the disabled reader obtains his data, his information in the content areas - so he too can contribute to the discussion and can "latch on" to the big ideas

appreciations

- . the vehicle through which the poet, the musician, the storyteller reaches his listener

Each resource for learning has characteristics that make it especially useful in certain contexts. Part of the challenge is to capitalize on the "best use" of the listening table because of its characteristics without placing limitations on its possibilities.

Next Steps

During the school year 1965-66,

- . the opportunity to explore the possibilities of the listening table could be extended
- . a construction model could be developed
- . original tapes for specific purposes could be programmed; graphics to accompany the tapes could be considered
- . information regarding tapes already in existence could be made available

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SPECIAL PROBLEMS PRESENTED BY THE
GIFTED CHILD RELATIVE TO THE TEACHING OF READING

by

Mrs. Glenn R. Weber

SPECIAL PROBLEMS PRESENTED BY THE GIFTED CHILD
RELATIVE TO THE TEACHING OF READING

Mrs. Glenn R. Weber

Perhaps no characteristic is found more consistently in gifted children than good reading ability. Most likely this ability is evidence of the gifted individual's interest in reading as a means of obtaining desired information. Only in rare cases can this great desire for knowledge be satisfied by some other means. Since much of the curricular differentiation, which the gifted need so badly, must be supplied through his own reading, it is most important that all of these students are good readers.

Two distinct administrative practices have developed in the elementary schools to provide for the individual differences in reading ability. The more general way of providing for the gifted child who is a good reader is by enriching the curriculum in the regular classroom. The other method is to provide special classes for all or a portion of the day. Acceleration (early admission to kindergarten, skipping a grade, "rapid progress") may play a part in either of these.

Even when working with the child who is a superior reader, certain problems arise in taking full advantage of his capabilities. Another type of problem, though less common, is that of the gifted child who is not achieving in reading. These students usually respond quickly to remedial help.

The goal of the reading teacher is not to push the gifted child's reading ability to the level of his mental ability, but rather to develop his ability to read well with good comprehension. How well this has been accomplished can be measured by how much the gifted student reads.

I. ENRICHMENT WITHIN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

In most elementary schools in the United States where provisions are made for the gifted, the teaching of reading is taken care of by enrichment in the regular classroom.

Walter Barbe¹ states: "Enrichment is the intentional differentiating of assignments to meet the particular

1. Walter Barbe, "Reading Aspects," Curriculum Planning For The Gifted, Louis A. Fliegler, ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961) p. 230.

needs and to develop the interests of each child. . . . The enrichment actually takes place when the teacher makes the assignment or directs or stimulates the students to undertake their reading. Neither merely assigning material to be read silently nor having the children take turns reading aloud to one another is enrichment."

The way gifted students are provided for in the regular classroom is described by Barbe²: "Usually the gifted child in the top reading group in a class is presented the same reading skills as the average child although less drill on the skill itself is necessary. The time thus saved or left over from the presentation and practice on skills is then spent on enrichment activities, but not on learning skills in the next higher grade-level book.

Enrichment activities in reading do not necessarily have to come from the reading textbook itself, although common practice is to have the gifted student read at least one of the basic texts of his particular grade level. Emphasis is placed upon a basic reading text because the lessons are carefully developed and present a balance between basic reading skills and practice on these skills. In most of the leading basal reading series, suggestions for enrichment activities for the gifted students are made in the teacher's manual."

One of the disadvantages of enrichment within the classroom is the time and skill demanded of the teacher in making preparations for individual activities. Another problem may arise when other children in the classroom see the gifted child receiving assignments which seem more interesting than those given to them.

II. SPECIAL CLASSES

In some schools differential education is provided by removing the gifted from the ordinary classroom for all or a portion of their time. Such ability grouping may also benefit the other students in the classroom by stimulating new leadership among students who previously were overshadowed by the gifted.

One such adjustment is to take children from various grades, but on the same reading level, from their regular classroom for the period of reading instruction. In this way the range of reading abilities in a classroom is only one year and the type of skill instruction needed is approximately the same. One such³ plan is the widely publicized Joplin, Missouri Plan.

2. Ibid., p. 231.

3. Roul Tunley, "Johnny Can Read in Joplin," Saturday Evening Post, Vol. 230, October 26, 1957.

Another technique is to group these bright students into special classes for all instruction and to teach them reading through a more or less individualized approach.

Many schools use special interest and special ability groups which meet only occasionally to provide enrichment in the reading program. Special library classes and reading clubs are examples of this approach.

A relatively new idea is that of including classes for the gifted in the schedule of the special-reading teacher, who formerly has been responsible only for the slow learner. In some cases the special reading teacher provides enrichment experiences for the bright students while the regular classroom teacher works with the slower learners. The supposed advantage of this procedure is that the regular classroom teacher knows the children better and can be more effective with the remedial reading problems. She gains the extra time to devote to them while the better readers leave the room for their period with the special teacher.

The use of individualized reading programs has been gaining attention and may be a partial answer for gifted children. These programs have many advantages, especially for the child who never encounters difficulty with the reading process and whose reading program is in need of enrichment. The major problem connected with the individualized program is the skill demanded of the teacher in operating it.

III. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN TEACHING GIFTED CHILDREN TO READ

A. Early Readers

One of the earliest problems presents itself when the child is already able to read when he enters first grade. Research studies indicate that about half of all children with I.Q.'s above 130 are reading before they enter first grade. Many teachers feel that these children should participate in the readiness program which usually precedes formal reading instruction. The objective of the program for the gifted child would not be to prepare for initial reading experiences, which he has already had, but rather to prepare him for the type of group activities which mass education makes necessary. If this objective is explained to the child and his parents the readiness activities need not seem meaningless.

This problem is sometimes solved by early admission of exceptional children to kindergarten or first grade.

B. Importance of Reading Skills

Another problem concerns the importance of reading skill instruction. Certain basic word attack skills (such as phonics, rules of syllabication, prefixes and suffixes) comprehension skills, and vocabulary building skills (such as root words and semantics) are presented at each grade level.

In many instances the gifted student is allowed to skip over these reading skills because he is already reading at or above grade level. How can he read above grade level without knowing the skills at that grade level? Part of the answer, especially in the earlier grades, is the gifted student's dependency on his superior memory. He is able to learn by the sight method without needing any of the word attack skills. The Reading Center in Chattanooga has noted that a large number of bright children from primary grades are diagnosed as reading problems. Apparently some of these problems develop from an over-dependency on memorizing in the first grade and a subsequent breaking down when the material became too long to memorize.

It must be remembered that often the reading skills being taught in a particular grade will not actually be needed until sometime later when the student is reading more difficult material. Sometimes this lack of knowledge of basic skills will not be felt until the student is in high school or even beyond. He is not likely to go back and learn those skills which he missed in elementary school, even though he discovers a need for them.

Another reason for being sure the gifted student receives the reading skills at his grade level is that they also apply to all of the language arts area. Research indicates that the gifted student, although he is superior in reading, is not superior in spelling. This may be because he does not appear to need phonics since he is reading at or above grade level. The fact that phonics aids in spelling is overlooked.

Certainly the gifted student should learn the same skills that are expected of all children, but he should be expected to learn them faster than the average child. This, of course, raises the controversy of whether enrichment at the child's grade level (horizontal enrichment) is wiser than moving him into higher grade level skills (vertical enrichment).

The question of grade-skipping also comes up. If the child is to skip a grade it is important that he does not miss out on some of the skills which would have been presented in the normal sequence.

C. Reading Comprehension

Strangely enough, the gifted student may present a more difficult problem in developing good reading comprehension than does the average student.

Unless the teacher's questions are worded to make him think, the gifted student may rely entirely on memory. The usual type of comprehension question which asks "How many?" or "How much?" will require some thought and use of comprehension skills for the average student. For the gifted student, however, it is no effort to remember answers to such questions. On the other hand, if the question is "Why?" the gifted student must not only remember facts but analyze the facts and come up with his own conclusions.

D. Oral Reading

The gifted student is very often bored with oral reading assignments. When the superior reader must listen for long periods of time to less able students as they stumble through the reading lesson, he usually finds it most frustrating.

Gifted students usually enjoy reading aloud themselves, but they are not dependent on it to the same extent as the average child. They probably should not be required to listen to others read aloud as often as the average student, nor to read aloud as much themselves.

E. The Gifted Student Who Is Not Achieving

What of the child who is identified as gifted but is not achieving in reading? Obviously, the same emotional and physical problems which affect the average child's ability to read can also hamper the gifted child. However, instructional causes of reading problems are less common among gifted children than among the average group.

Reading difficulties in the gifted student sometimes go undetected. The bright student who is a poor reader, by paying careful attention in class, may pick up so much knowledge that it is hard to believe he is not reading his textbooks efficiently.

When given remedial help, the gifted child usually responds quickly. His ability in verbal areas such as word fluency, vocabulary and verbal reasoning help to simplify the process.

F. Reading As An Escape

Another problem sometimes encountered is that of the gifted child who uses reading as a means of escape from the real world and his fear of failure in group relationships. Merely because a child reads a lot does not necessarily mean that he is doing this.

VI. WHAT IS BEING DONE FOR THE GIFTED STUDENT IN MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

The Minneapolis Public Schools report on "Education for the Gifted," March 9, 1961 gives this General Statement of Philosophy:

Education seeks the greatest development of every youngster according to his unique nature and needs. Therefore, identical opportunity for education does not mean identical learning experiences and/or at the same time.

The basic type of provision for the able learner is curriculum adjustment through enrichment in the regular classroom: Enrichment in the regular procedures, grouping procedures, and limited acceleration. Enrichment in the regular classroom may be supplemented through part-time special classes which focus attention on the nature and needs of the able learner.

Dr. Rodney Tillman, Assistant Superintendent of Schools in charge of elementary education, speaking at the March 15, 1965 meeting of the Curriculum Committee, made these comments:

In most schools... because we have quite a number of basal textbooks, there is a series of readers for the more accelerated students.

In addition, every teacher works on the individualized approach. If you know the child and know materials, you cannot fail. Also... most schools have the assistance of a librarian who encourages the more able children.

Teachers are encouraged to make wide use of reference materials and to use more difficult materials in special projects.

Sometimes the teacher may bring in other materials (magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, travel folders, etc.) to encourage broadening of interests or to encourage deepening of current interests in the gifted student's reading.

THE READING PROGRAM IN THE ELEMENTARY GRADES,

MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by

Miss Caroline K. Barron

THE READING PROGRAM IN THE ELEMENTARY GRADES

THE MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Miss Caroline K. Barron

In the Minneapolis Public Schools, the teacher selects the plan which she feels will best meet the needs of the learner. A teacher might use several approaches during a school year. The most widely used approach is the basal reader. However, other approaches such as language experience and self-selection or individualized teaching are also used. A teacher may combine methods, e.g., basal reader and self-selection. Words in color, the multi-level instruction program of Science Research Association Laboratories and programmed materials are being used experimentally in several schools.

To guide teachers, whatever approach may be used, extensive curriculum materials are published, outlining principles, psychological characteristics of children, variations in background and ability, specific skills and understandings to be developed. Illustrative lessons are included to assist the teacher in her planning.

I. OBJECTIVES

Because reading involves both attitudes and skills, the Minneapolis Public Schools endeavor to provide for all children to the limit of their abilities experiences which will develop:

1. A desire to read and appreciation of what is read.
2. Broad reading interests.
3. Skills of

comprehension
word recognition
study
oral and silent reading

II. INSTRUCTION LEVELS

Children vary widely in their abilities, in maturity, in background, in emotional and in physical development. Therefore, it is not possible to set goals for specific skills and understandings for all children in any given grade. It is expected that children will progress at their own rate and that each teacher will plan reading experiences at several levels in order to meet their needs. This will be done by grouping within the grade and providing appropriate materials and experiences for each group as well as for individuals within each group.

To assist teachers with such planning, curriculum materials are geared to four levels, rather than to kindergarten and six grades.

These levels are known as:

1. The Pre-Reading Period.
2. Beginning-to-Read Period.
3. Growing-in-Independence Period (usually grades two and three and sometimes four).
4. Extending Reading Power and Interests Period (Grades four, five and six).

A. The Pre-Reading Period

A reading readiness program is carried on in the kindergarten and grade one, and continued with any child who is functioning at the pre-reading level. It comprises all the experiences a child has which promote the communications skills. These include speaking, listening, observing, exploring, sharing and playing. An environment in which the child feels secure fosters curiosity, self-esteem, initiative and confidence. In such an environment the kindergarten teacher not only develops interest in stories and poems, but through carefully planned experiences, helps to develop the skills of listening, of speaking, of auditory and visual discrimination.

These planned experiences include reading to the children, providing a reading center where they may browse, taking them to the school library, permitting them to select stories to be read to them, retelling stories in sequence, illustrating and dramatizing stories, using their creative ability in making up stories, poems and songs. They include also learning to recognize printed signs, their own names, bulletin board titles. They include games, puzzles and activities which develop auditory discrimination, visual discrimination, left-to-right and top-to-bottom orientation.

B. Beginning-to-Read Period

The initial approach to the actual teaching of reading is through the children's own experiences. These are related by the children and recorded by the teacher on the chalk board. Letters, trips, bulletin boards -- innumerable occasions provide opportunity for relating, recording and reading. Repetition of words in many places makes them familiar.

The next experience may be with a pre-primer. Since the child is already familiar with the vocabulary, his first experience with a book is successful and he is eager for further reading experiences.

Children learn to recognize and pronounce new words through:

1. Sight recognition -- the meaning of the word in context.
2. The recognizable word parts or general configuration, structural analysis -- seeing the small well-known words in the unknown word.
3. Phonetic analysis -- earliest skills will be recognition of initial consonants. The child will recognize the sound of some consonants in word endings, digraphs -- th, wh, sh, ch -- occurring initially or in the final position, in meaningful context; he will recognize the letters of the alphabet and will begin to use a simplified dictionary.

However, word recognition is only one of several areas of emphasis in the developmental program. Developing a desire to read and appreciation of what he reads is one of these. To encourage interest, the teacher plans such experiences as choosing books to read as a leisure time activity, visiting the school library and the public library, browsing in the attractive library center in his own classroom, sharing with the class what he has enjoyed by telling the story, dramatizing or reading parts of it to them.

Comprehension is essential to the reading process and the teacher makes plans to develop this skill. These plans will include among many others, helping the child to extend his vocabulary, oral as well as his sight vocabulary, having him find the main idea of the story, find supporting detail, sense relationships, make comparisons and contrasts, organize a sequence of events and draw conclusions.

Study skills are developed throughout the elementary school years. In the "Beginning to Read" period, these skills are taught along with, rather than separate from, other basic skills. For example, the awareness of a book and its parts -- cover, title, table of contents -- begins when the child or teacher asks for a specific book or story.

Children will need to locate books for specific kinds of information to be used in science and social studies, or to meet individual interests.

The teacher plans experiences to help the child increase his attention span, to work independently, to

locate books and stories for specific kinds of information, to know how encyclopedias are used, to organize ideas in sequence, to use picture dictionaries, to read pictures, charts, simple graphs and maps, and to make lists of books on a specific topic.

Oral reading is important in the beginning stages of learning to read, not only for the purpose of checking word recognition and other reading skills, but more importantly for the enjoyment of the story in an audience situation.

Therefore, the experiences planned by the teacher will prepare him to read with ease and in thought units, to pronounce words clearly and distinctly, to observe punctuation, to use his voice appropriately, to share his enjoyment and appreciation of a story by the manner in which he reads it.

C. Growing-in-Independence Period (usually occurs in grades 2-3-4)

The period of developing independence in reading is concerned with the child's growth in fundamental reading habits, attitudes and interests.

In order to develop favorable attitudes toward reading, it is important for a child to feel successful as well as to face a challenge.

Through innumerable experiences the teacher plans to help children develop favorable attitudes toward and interest in reading. Since these experiences are perhaps fairly well known and since they differ from those of the "Beginning-to-Read" period mainly in the nature and greater variety of reading materials, as well as the increased skills of the children, it does not seem necessary to discuss them here.

1. Comprehension

Children in this period develop comprehension skills as they --

Read for facts.
Read to organize.
Read to evaluate.
Read to interpret.
Read to appreciate.

As at all age levels, there are marked individual differences in the range and depth of comprehension. Every child to the limit of his ability is aided in developing comprehension ability. Experiences are

planned for increasing vocabulary, for learning to get the central thought of the material read, to find specific detail, to summarize, to make predictions concerning the outcome of a story. (The above is only a partial list.)

2. Word Recognition

At this level children are developing independence and versatility in word recognition abilities. They have acquired a substantial number of sight words in the first year but are also using meaning clues, auditory analysis or phonetic clues, visual analysis or structural clues. Instruction is adjusted to individual differences.

In using meaning clues the child uses the context and sometimes pictures to help in identification and then the pronunciation of the word.

In using auditory analysis or phonetic clues, the child learns to recognize consonant sounds, consonant blends, digraphs, silent letters, long and short vowel sounds and phonograms.

In using visual analysis or structural clues, he learns to recognize root words, prefixes and suffixes, compound words and contractions.

3. Study Skills

To develop necessary study skills the teacher plans experiences for the child through which he learns to summarize, to skim, to check plans, to use a table of contents, to refer to an index, to use a glossary or a dictionary, to use the alphabet in locating information or in filing it, to recognize a paragraph and its key sentence, to interpret pictures, simple maps, bar graphs and charts - (a partial list.)

4. Oral Reading

In this period of "growing-in-independence", the planned experiences include, among others, reading committee reports, radio scripts over the loud speaker, gift books, reports from the student council, communications from other rooms, original stories, interesting parts of a story.

The child learns to prepare for oral reading by first reading silently, learns among other things, to pronounce words correctly and to enunciate clearly, to portray character and to distinguish between narration and conversation.

Other Purposes of Reading

A brief reference only will be made here to "Reading in the Content Areas, Literary Appreciation and Personal Reading Program."

In the "content area" it should be pointed out that each subject has a different vocabulary and its own requirements. Because children vary widely in their abilities, teachers must provide materials of varying difficulty.

During this period children are becoming more interested in a variety of books. Through literature they become acquainted with the wisdom, achievements, and dreams of men. The teacher's own interest in books is important. The children will share her joy in prose and poetry and will grow in appreciation under her guidance.

Personal reading is reading for one's self and with others for enjoyment and information, for relaxation and fun and for satisfying curiosity. It is highly individualized; therefore children are encouraged to explore the materials available and to extend their interests. The foremost goal of the total reading program should be to stimulate independent reading as a reader's own choice of activity.

D. Extending Reading Power and Interests (Usually occurs Grades 4-5-6)

The developmental program continues to present systematic practice in maintaining and improving reading skills as well as stimulating reading interests. Individual differences become more pronounced and specific instruction is often highly individualized. The capable readers are able to work independently to a great extent but the teacher must determine which skills are still needed in the content areas, for literary appreciation and for personal reading. Less capable readers require a program planned to meet their needs at their particular stage of development. This will allow them opportunities to grow at individual rates.

The program continues to stress attitudes and interests, comprehension abilities, word recognition skills, study skills and oral reading. To promote favorable attitudes and greater interest, the teacher assists the child to develop new interests, includes many kinds of materials, helps him to become more discriminating and encourages him to share his reading experience in creative ways.

Comprehension abilities are further developed through a variety of reading experiences. In reading for information, the child is seeking for facts, consulting several sources and making selections according to his purpose. He learns to organize the materials read, he learns to evaluate the accuracy of statements, the author's qualifications, the difference between fact and opinion, between what is relevant and what is irrelevant, between what is logical and what is emotional. He learns to interpret what he reads in terms of the writer's purpose -- to entertain, to influence or to express a mood.

Appreciation of what he reads increases with experiences planned to stimulate his sensory impressions, to make him aware of humor, style of words, of the development of character and of plot.

Word recognition skills continue to be taught. In addition to acquiring a more extensive sight vocabulary, the child increases his ability to attack new words not only through the use of contextual clues, but through visual and auditory analysis. In addition, this ability is strengthened by practice in the more advanced skills of structural analysis with emphasis on root words, syllabication, prefixes and suffixes, etc. The dictionary becomes an important source of help and it is at this point that the child receives instruction in using the dictionary to determine or verify pronunciation, meaning and spelling.

There is continuing emphasis on study skills during this period -- locating information, using general references, interpreting visual materials and organizing them. Problems in science, mathematics, social studies, require the effective use of many different kinds of material and it is here that experiences are planned to help the child develop independent study habits.

Since it is important that children not only read well, but come to value reading as important in their lives, the "personal reading program" continues to be emphasized during these years. To this end time is provided for the child to read material of his own choice and for his own purpose, for pleasure, to satisfy some temporary interest or for a more serious purpose.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Curriculum Committee Meeting
Citizen's Committee on Public
Education
October 8, 1964

THE TEACHING OF READING

Dr. Theodore Clymer
Professor, Elementary Education Dept.
College of Education
University of Minnesota

Editor's Note:

The following talk was presented by Dr. Clymer to the Curriculum Subcommittee with the objective of providing the committee with a "feel" for the problems which face the modern educator when he tries to solve the problem of how best to teach reading.

The talk is reproduced below with very little editing for the benefit of the readers of this report, primarily because it accomplished so well the objective which had been placed before Dr. Clymer by the committee.

I am pleased to have an opportunity to talk with this group, particularly because I feel strongly that a better understanding of what education is and what education can accomplish can be reached by exactly the approach your committee is utilizing.

A review of the teaching of reading requires that several major points be made. First of all, children learn to read in a variety of ways. Children are marvelously plastic and flexible. They cooperate with us and learn under a variety of procedures. I wish, of course, as does every educator that I could tell you if there is one good way to teach children to read. But you know as well as I that this is not so. I attempt at some times to do this in my methods classes. Then I am always reminded of the embarrassing situations where a teacher has utilized methods of which I do not approve and still achieved excellent success. What this means, of course, is that success is indeed a function of method, but it is a function of other things in addition.

Children learn to read in a variety of ways. The linguistic approach, which we used to call the phonogram approach, is certainly one way to teach children to read. The basal approach, which is used in most of the first grades in Minneapolis, is certainly another way. In the individualized reading approach, the teacher relies extensively on so-called trade books which are intended to stimulate the child's interest in reading. Also these allow the teacher to determine what the child's skills are.

Our problem is not to determine what method is the best for teaching a child to learn to read. Any method skillfully applied will be successful. Our problem is to select which of the methods or approaches currently available will be the most effective for which children. As we do research in reading methods, we realize more and more that a general approach is not the answer. At this time we are looking for what kind of children will respond best to which approach. Or stating it the other way, what kind of an approach can best be used for the particular students we are trying to teach. The approaches that will work in a private country day school will probably not work with the children from a disadvantaged area. Not only are children different, but also children bring different backgrounds to school. Visual discrimination and auditory discrimination extend over broad ranges with different children. You are, I am sure, aware of the United States Office of Education studies in nearly thirty centers across the United States where different methods and approaches to first grade reading are being compared. The basal approach, the phonetic approach, the initial teaching alphabet and many others are being examined under highly controlled conditions. Dr. Guy Bond and Dr. Robert Dykstra will correlate these results, and within the next two years we should have some very interesting information about the efficiency of a given method under a given set of circumstances.

Among the methods which will be tested is the initial teaching alphabet (ITA) approach. Here some letters are dropped from the present alphabet and others are added so that a total of forty-four symbols result. Actually this method is based on the old Pitman shorthand and allows the child to sound out any word spelled with it. There are, of course, serious problems in evaluating any particular approach, and research on evaluation is just as important as research on methods.

The entire program will cost close to \$1 million dollars. Naturally it will not give us the final answer. If one were to ask will this study decide whether we will use phonetics or the basal approach, the answer would have to be no. But short of that, this study should give us a great many other answers.

Thus the first point that I want to make is that children learn in different ways and that we must have different methods to accommodate them.

The second point I want to make is that the methods we use depend to some degree on the mood of the times. I doubt that I would readily admit this under other circumstances. Still it is important to recognize that the current of popular thinking does affect the teaching of reading. There has been emphasis recently on the return to the "tried and true methods of old." Education, like life, becomes more and more complex and more and more frustrating. The "good old-fashioned way" isn't always the answer.

A very good book on this subject is entitled "American Reading Instruction" by Nyla Vanton Smith. It is, unfortunately, out of print but should be reappearing again within a year. This book traces American reading instruction from the colonial days to the time that the book was published in the 1930's. It provides a good picture of what happened to reading instruction throughout periods of time and how the reading program reflects the mood of the times as these are influenced by politics, science and other areas of human endeavor.

Initial reading is taught in a certain way influenced largely by ideas about children and the kind of values that should be communicated through a reading program. These values have changed over the years, and as they have, the teaching of reading has changed. Hopefully the new edition will update the information.

When we look at some of the things that people are currently asking about methods and materials, we realize that the mood of the times is important. There is a small community in Wisconsin that decided to return to the McGuffey readers. The McGuffey readers without question promote good, solid middle-class American values. Certainly I am not opposed to these values. But in the present day we must also regard the trend toward culturally integrated materials. These are an indication of where we stand right now in the world, not of where we stood when the McGuffey readers were popular.

Some of you are familiar with materials which evolved in Detroit which utilized pictures in which both white and Negro families were depicted. The materials might have been better, incidentally, if the Negro family was pictured in a slightly more realistic setting. In the Detroit books they are shown as a very nice suburban family. Although this may provide a goal, it is currently not very realistic. On the other hand, reaction to the more realistic situation of a tenement dwelling with children dressed in such a way that their shirts don't quite meet their trousers could be expected to produce violent objections from both the teachers and the children.

What this suggests to me, of course, is that our materials should indeed be more realistic than they have been in the past but that they should always leave room for aspiration. They should be realistic while still defining the goals. In other words, children want to aspire, and our materials should allow them to do this.

But to get back to the initial point, moods are changing; times are changing. Accordingly, the materials that we use must change also in terms of the values and the cultures and the aspirations they represent. In the immediate future I believe the teaching of morals in our reading materials is going to be more direct. But I do hope we don't revert to the McGuffey readers where the story ended with a moral and the student learned to recite this verbatim. More realistic in our day are materials which do indeed have a moral but which use this moral to try to guide the child's behavior.

Thus we can expect our methods to change with the mood of the times, just as other things will change with the mood of the times. Indeed I am somewhat disturbed that we don't change our methods and materials enough. Generally when parents come to complain about what's happening in the teaching of reading, I ask them to spend an hour or so in school. This generally takes care of the problem. Although at times I am disturbed because a mother returns and says, "Yes. It's just like I remembered it. It isn't like I thought it was going to be at all." Well I really hope that it isn't like mother remembered it. I hope that it has changed, and I am sure it has. Certainly many of the things we do today are held in common with what was done a generation or two ago. But there have, in addition, been many changes.

A third point to be made in this discussion is that the method used in teaching reading will depend on our view of the nature of the child and our view of the learning process. Our idea of what children are and how they learn will certainly affect the way in which we approach the teaching of reading and what we provide for the child. This is best demonstrated by approaches which are called the individualized reading approaches. The concept here is that reading is caught rather than taught. It is like a disease, and if you expose the children to it, they will catch it. Thus you should fill your room with good books and find topics that are interesting to the children, and they in turn will obediently lead the teacher to what it is that she is supposed to teach the child.

The individualized reading approach is very much like what we at one time called the "child-centered school room" or child-centered teaching. The concept is based on the fact that each child is indeed unique and that his reading skills differ. Thus if we have thirty children, each one of them will represent a different degree of reading skill, interest and capability. It follows then that each child ought to be taught with materials particularly adapted to his needs.

The individualized approach neglects the fact that as the number of groups increase or as the number of teaching lessons increase, the amount of time that any teacher can spend with any one group or any one child decreases. Thus if you have thirty children in a sixty-minute period and if each child requires individualized attention, you can spend only two minutes per child. In these terms the method appears ridiculous. Yet it is very seriously recommended and is, of course, being used effectively in certain instances.

An important factor is that the individualized approach has, of course, pointed up the need for trying to take care of each child's differences to the extent that this is possible under the limitations provided by time, materials and teaching staff. Thus teachers are now more concerned with supplying a good library collection so that the children can read beyond what is required for systematic instruction. Thus this approach has indeed added another dimension to our

thinking. But we must ask how does a child learn to read? Does he really learn to read simply by being exposed to materials, or does he learn to read by a set of directive experiences which the teacher prearranges and makes sure that he experiences? My own feeling is that for most children it is necessary to teach them reading skills.

The fourth point that I want to make concerns the relationship between the methods and materials used and the nature of reading. In order to determine this relationship, we must answer the question of "what is reading?" There is no mean argument currently as to what reading is. The linguists and psychologists look upon reading primarily as a matter of "breaking the code." More specifically they talk in terms of learning the relationship of the printed symbol to the sound it represents. To the linguist and psychologist this is reading, and when the child is able to do this, he has accomplished the objective.

People who study reading outside of the linguistic/psychological framework are also concerned with this aspect of "breaking the code." But they do not wish to do this at the expense of meaning and understanding. Certainly many of the first phases of the teaching of reading relate to the mechanics, that is, to the "breaking of the code;" and there is very little attempt to teach meaning or understanding. Many linguists feel that you must separate the two concepts of mechanics and meaning. The teaching of the mechanics is uppermost, and once these are mastered, attention can be given to meaning.

Still another approach requires that we must not teach words at all but rather that we must teach whole sentences, and, of course, the major emphasis is being placed on meaning. In teaching the sentence, one is concerned not only with the pronunciation of the word but also with intonation and stress patterns, for these too contribute to meaning.

It follows, of course, in the minds of many that both approaches properly utilized at the proper time can accomplish the greatest amount. In other words, we must put mechanics together with meaning so that the child emerges not only as a good reader but also as a reader who understands what he is reading and who is capable of a creative approach to language.

One of my greatest successes in the teaching of reading related to utilizing a Tarzan book which one of the children brought to school. It contained fifty vocabulary words. Within a few days everyone in the room could read, write and spell every one of those fifty words. The class had learned them much more readily than twenty other words that I had been trying to teach them previously. The difference, of course, was obvious. The Tarzan words provide a basis for interest and understanding, and its effect on the learning process was amazing. This example illustrates the importance of the impact of

interest on learning ability. Thus if you select materials solely based on "breaking the code" and if you sacrifice interest to this objective, a problem presents itself.

The fifth point that I want to make in this presentation is that the method used to teach reading depends on our view of the nature of the regularity of English. If English is a regular language, we will teach reading in one way. If it is not, we must teach it in another way. The linguist, of course, maintains that English is a very regular language and even quotes figures in the area of 85 to 92 per cent regularity. If it is indeed this regular, then you can teach reading in a certain way. If it is not this regular, you must make certain adjustments.

Certainly any teacher of reading knows that the phonetic rules have many exceptions. A study that I did entitled "The Utility of Phonic Generalizations in the Primary Grade" which was published in the January, 1963, issue of The Reading Teacher attempted to determine whether some of the things we teach about words in terms of their regularity are indeed true or whether they are only partial truths. This study involved the frequently used primary words and the rules listed in a number of books that use the phonetic approach. As a case in point, we took the rule that when two vowels are adjacent, the first one is long and the second is silent. We found 309 words which conformed to this statement and 377 which were exceptions. Thus many of the rules we teach about English words simply aren't so. Studies of this sort are now under way utilizing computers, and within the next two years we should have some very good information about the extent of irregularities in the English language.

The last point I want to make relates to the basal approach to reading which is the one widely utilized in the Minneapolis schools. There is no such thing as one basal approach. There are a good many differences between the basal systems that are being used, and some of the materials that I have here will demonstrate this. Initial reading instruction, reading readiness and numerous other factors can affect the teaching of reading by the basal method.

Finally, in response to a question from the group, it is very difficult to define reading, for reading is many things to many people. But if I were forced to indicate a definition for oral reading, I would have to include within this definition word recognition, comprehension, study skills and oral reading. These are the four basic points which the word "reading" represents to me. Any program for the teaching of reading must take all four of these into consideration and must not neglect any one of them. This is not a very technical definition, nor is it a very concise definition. But it is most assuredly a practical definition and one which will be required to prepare our children for the challenges of the years ahead.

APPENDIX B

Curriculum Committee Meeting
Citizen's Committee on Public
Education
April 5, 1965

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TEACHING OF READING

Professor Guy L. Bond
Professor of Education
University of Minnesota

Editor's Note:

The final formal meeting of the Curriculum Committee was addressed by Dr. Guy L. Bond. His comments were so significant and summarized so succinctly the current state of the art and science of the teaching of reading that there was unanimous agreement to include his presentation in this report. Since Dr. Bond's remarks were not available verbatim, they have been reconstructed with his approval from notes supplied by him and by members of the Committee.

I. INTRODUCTION

As many of you know, I have explored various projects over the years related to the teaching of reading. Recently an extensive reading research program has been organized with the objective of determining the effects of as many of the factors as possible which influence the teaching of reading.

Needless to say, the method or the approach for the teaching of reading is important. However, there are many factors in addition. The background of the child, his readiness to learn to read, his cultural orientation, his intelligence, his emotional stability -- these are but a very few of the factors which affect ability to learn to read. When one adds to these the fact that there is a distinct difference in learning capacity between boys and girls, that certain physical differences such as visual perception may be important factors and that the teacher is at least equally as important as the method, one starts to gain some insight into the complexity of the problem.

II. FIRST GRADE READING STUDIES

The project currently under way was conceived at a Carnegie Foundation-sponsored meeting at Syracuse University several years ago by members of the National Conference on Research in English. This conference was attended by twenty-seven people,

five of whom were connected in one way or another with the University of Minnesota. The attendees agreed that the objective of determining what factors are related to successful teaching of reading could best be achieved by a nation-wide study at the first grade level. As the project is presently constituted, it involves only first grade teaching. If it is to be completely effective, it will necessarily require a follow-through beyond the first grade; a decision relative to this will have to be made once the results of the present study are available.

In addition to the major goal of exploring the effects of various methods of teaching first grade reading on the reading ability of the student, the study has another important objective, namely, that of demonstrating that nation-wide research involving numerous research centers is feasible, particularly if properly coordinated. Needless to say, coordination is facilitated by the use of computers which will make possible the answering of a long list of specific questions.

The data collected in the study are to be analyzed at the University of Minnesota under the direction of Dr. Bond and Dr. Robert Dykstra. Results of the individual studies are to be available by December 31, 1965, and of the combined data by December 31, 1966.

In the field of educational research the most active area of endeavor over the last three decades has involved attempts to gain insight into the problems of the teaching of reading. Comparable data and conclusions from these numerous studies are not available, however, simply because each one is self-contained and is set up with ground rules unlike those used by other researchers.

In the present study, funds for which have been provided by the U. S. Office of Education, there are twenty-seven research centers, each conducting studies which are self-contained but which have in common a uniform frame of reference. These twenty-seven centers were chosen from over a hundred submitted proposals for inclusion in the national cooperative study. Most of the twenty-seven centers are utilizing several approaches to reading. Cooperation and agreement in such areas as teacher selection, amount of time spent on reading, the mechanics of accumulating data, and other important factors have surpassed all expectation. All-told this study involves twenty-five to thirty thousand students, about one thousand teachers and numerous schools and classrooms in a wide variety of socio-economic and cultural areas.

The areas of the United States in which the studies are located give evidence to the variety of situations in which the relationships between the experimental variables and growth in reading are being studied. In each area an attempt to get an unbiased sampling of children, teachers, and economic circumstances for each experimental variable group has been made.

The range of situations and rigor of controls are quite apparent to one who has had the good fortune to visit the independent research projects. A list of the directors of the projects is given below to indicate the regions of the United States in which the independent studies are being conducted.

Elizabeth Anne Bordeaux, Goldsboro, N. C. (City Schools)
Jeanne S. Chall, City University of New York
Donald L. Cleland, University of Pittsburgh
Edward Fry, Rutgers - The State University, N. J.
Harry T. Hahn, Oakland Schools, Pontiac, Michigan
Albert J. Harris, City University of New York
Robert B. Hayes, Department of Public Instruction, Harrisburg, Pa.
Arthur W. Heilman, Pennsylvania State University
Thomas D. Horn, University of Texas
William M. Kendrick, San Diego County Department of Education
James B. Macdonald, University of Wisconsin
John G. Manning, Fresno State College
Sister M. Marita, Marquette University
Albert J. Mazurkiewicz, Lehigh University
Roy McCanne, Consultant, Colorado State Department of Education
Katherine A. Morrill, Moses Y. Beach School, Wallingford, Conn.
Helen A. Murphy, Boston University
Olive S. Niles, Springfield Massachusetts Public Schools
Hale C. Reid, Cedar Rapids, Iowa Public Schools
Robert B. Ruddell, University of California
J. Wesley Schneyer, University of Pennsylvania
William D. Sheldon, Syracuse University
George D. Spache, University of Florida
Doris U. Spencer, Johnson State College, Vermont
Russell G. Stauffer, University of Delaware
Harold J. Tanyzer, Hofstra University
Nita M. Wyatt, University of Kansas
Guy L. Bond, Coordinating Center, University of Minnesota
Robert Dykstra, Coordinating Center, University of Minnesota

The First Grade Reading Studies are, in fact, twenty-seven independent studies so well coordinated in research design, instruments of measurement, information gathered, and comparability of data collected, that comparisons among the studies will be possible in ways that have not previously existed. The most unique characteristic of the First Grade Reading Project is that it can also be considered one large study since all of the data obtained in the twenty-seven individual studies will be fed into the Coordinating Center for further analysis, enabling the testing of many hypotheses that are not within the scope of any one of the independent studies nor in any comparison of the findings between any of the studies.

The list of common data given below indicates the type of information that will be available for the detailed study of the total analysis. These appraisals were chosen by the

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directors of the individual projects at conferences conducted by the Coordinating Center. In addition to these common data, each project will submit to the Coordinating Center all the unique data collected. Many studies will have overlapping unique appraisals that will increase the scope of observation available for study in combined analyses.

A. Common Data to be Gathered in Each Study

1. About the Child

- Sex
- Chronological Age
- Mental Age (Pintner-Cunningham)
- Ethnic Group
- Amount of Pre-First Grade School Experience
- Number of days absent during the experimental period

2. Initial Test Data

a. From the Murphy Durrell Readiness Test

- Phoneme Identification
- Capital Letter Identification
- Lower Case Letter Identification
- Learning Rate Score

b. From the Thurstone Tests

- Pattern Copying
- Identical Form Recognition

c. From the Metropolitan Readiness Test

- Word Meaning
- Listening

3. About the teacher

- Sex
- Age
- Degree Held
- Type of Teaching Certificate
- Years of Teaching Experience
- Experience Teaching First Grade
- Marital Status
- Number of Her Own Children
- Score on San Diego Teacher Attitude Scale
- Number of Days Absent During the Experimental Period
- Teacher Rating by Supervisors

4. About School Policies

Number Enrolled in Class
Length of School Day
Length of School Year
Number of First-Grade Rooms in Building
Number of First-Grade Rooms in District
Type of Library Facilities Available
Per Pupil Costs

5. About the Community

Median Education of Adults
Median Income
Population
Type

6. Final Test Data

Stanford Achievement Test
San Diego Measure of Attitude Towards Reading
(Certain other measures will be used for uniform samples
from the population in each project.)
Gilmore Oral Reading Test
Gates Word Pronunciation Test
Fry Test of Phonetically Regular Words
Creative Writing Sample
 (1) Quality
 (2) Creativity

III. WHAT WILL THE STUDY TELL US?

Certainly the study hopes to provide insight into the efficacy of the various approaches to reading when utilized under a wide variety of conditions. Other critical points will certainly include the all-important question of why boys have more difficulty in learning to read than do girls. Indeed, seventy-five per cent of the children who encounter reading difficulties are boys.

The study will hope to determine how important is more emphasis in the school curriculum on learning to read. Also, for whom is this important?

All-important is the question of when should systematic instruction be started. Are there children who should start to read earlier than the age of six and, if so, how should they be taught? One of the things that the study has already indicated is that fewer children than was originally supposed can read anything more than a few words when they enter school.

This does not mean some children could not or should not start to read earlier. It simply points up the need for answers to this all-important question. In some countries children start to read at the age of five. In others they start as late as seven or eight years of age. Experience in other countries may be helpful, although the problems of teaching phonetically spelled languages as opposed to languages such as English, which are only partially phonetically spelled, complicate the situation.

Teaching reading to a child when he is six years old is practiced commonly in the United States, Germany, Switzerland, France, Holland, Belgium, Italy, Japan and Australia-Sydney.

On the other hand, England, Scotland, New Zealand, and Australia-Melbourne start at the age of five.

The teaching of reading is delayed until age seven in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Russia and Finland.

If we start earlier for some, and I believe that the evidence shows that we could and should, we will need techniques for finding those who would profit from an earlier starting age. More individual training approaches will be required, and a reappraisal of our prereading or reading readiness programs will be required. Special attention will have to be given to perceptual and visual factors and the extent to which these are developed in a given child.

The most important concern of the study, of course, is Method. Under what circumstances is one method to be preferred over another? It is hoped that the study will provide important insight into this all-important question.

There was a time when reading problems were related by educators largely to the intelligence of the child. The advent of mass education taught us, however, that much more closely related to initial success than native intelligence are such factors as the perceptual ability of the child, his capability to give attention and his ability to adapt to the methods by means of which the learning is being presented.

Thus children with below average intelligence may learn to read quite adequately, whereas others with very high intelligence levels may have extreme difficulty. An immediate conclusion that the high level intelligence student with reading difficulties has emotional problems certainly cannot be overlooked. But it is far from a complete story.

The importance of reading readiness, the ability to diagnose problems related to the classroom itself, the use of a wide variety of materials, the determination of the exact time at which the child is ready to learn to read, the possibility of

teaching boys differently from girls and the recognition of the fact that we should start to teach reading when it is educationally and socio-economically most worthwhile are all factors which require definition.

The teacher, the social attitude of the group as well as of the individual, native verbal fluency which is not necessarily related to intelligence, such physical defects as poor hearing and stuttering, the effect of siblings, a variety of socio-economic or cultural situations -- these are all areas that the study will explore.

Once the study is completed, it is hoped that we will have some insight into which method of teaching of reading is best for word recognition, for achievement of basic comprehension abilities, for the relationship of these skills to various types of comprehension, for creative writing, for literature appreciation, and for numerous other factors.

We hope that the study will tell us which method is best for organizing the class. For example, what contribution to the teaching of reading can the ungraded primary make? What about the individualized approach to the teaching of reading? What other classroom factors are critical?

We will hope that the study will tell us whether it is possible to bring the best elements of the various methods and approaches together into a composite method suitable for all children. Or do different groups of children profit most from specific methods more or less designed for them? For example, is there one method which is best for a disadvantaged group and another which is best for a group which comes from a culturally sophisticated background.

We will hope to know something more than we already know about the importance of teacher training. What kind of training should the teacher of reading have and how much training? Are teachers with a liberal arts background more competent than those with more of an education background?

The influence of classroom size, the amount of money spent per pupil, the influence of the overall size of the school and the school system -- these are all factors upon which the study should shed some light.

In addition, the study is not overlooking the all-important problem of the "Hawthorne" effect -- a term describing effect on the overall result of the enthusiasm a teacher demonstrates for the method she is using. This enthusiasm may vary from emotional involvement or prejudice to intellectual conviction and will affect the results accordingly.

The above discussion is intended to provide insight into what the study hopefully will tell us rather than to present in organized fashion what the objectives of the study are. But certainly, as already stated, a major objective relates to gaining understanding of the relationship between the method or approach of the teaching of reading to its efficacy as influenced by a broad spectrum of variables.

IV. WHAT THE STUDY HAS ALREADY TOLD US

Three conclusions have already evolved from the study. These are not necessarily major ones. Indeed they are conclusions which could well have been predicted to some extent prior to the time that the study was undertaken. Their importance is such, however, that they merit brief discussion.

The study has told us already that every child who is involved is profiting. Because of this study each child will in all likelihood be a better reader than he might otherwise have been.

The study has told us also that this is a very good way to provide in-service training for teachers. The fact that the teacher is involved in the study means that she is learning more about the teaching of reading. She is gaining insight into it that she would not otherwise have gained; and, accordingly, she will emerge a better teacher.

Finally -- and the importance of this conclusion cannot be overemphasized -- the study tells us that the difference in the effectiveness of teachers will be greater than the difference in the effectiveness between the methods those teachers use. This points up the need for better training of teachers, but it also points up the fact that regardless of the method used, the greatest effectivity results if the teacher is skilled in diagnosing and treating individual student's problems.

V. THE METHODS AND APPROACHES TO THE TEACHING OF READING STUDIED BY THIS PROJECT

The list of the experimental variables being studied indicates the scope of the enterprise and the number of individual projects in which each variable is included as one of the several approaches.

Basic Reading	24
Language Experience	12
Phonic Emphasis	6
Linguistic Emphasis	6
Initial Teaching Alphabet	
Emphasis	5

Individualized Reading Emphasis	4
Reading Readiness	4
Audio-Visual Problems	4
Role of Teacher Supervisor	4
Approaches for Culturally Different	5
Other approaches	7

A. The Basal and Phonic Methods

The teaching of reading is far from an exact science, as the above discussion has already well indicated. Accordingly it is difficult to discuss precise "methods". If, however, one were to talk in terms of methods, he may well mention the phonic and word recognition methods which have evolved over the years and which have been used most widely.

I do not consider these as necessarily distinct methods. The issue of the relative emphasis which should be given to phonics and to more diversified teaching methods of teaching word recognition is still a lively topic. Controlled research comparing the two methods, however, has been practically nonexistent because of the general agreement among reading experts that a combination of these methods is essential. As a result, diversified method without phonics or pure phonics programs are difficult, if not impossible, to find and the controversial issue of phonics OR diversified methods has been largely relegated to the popular press. Research interest in the area is now focusing on not whether or not phonics should be taught but how they should be taught, to what extent, and to what kinds of pupils. Or more exactly, the focus is now on how the many meaning, phonetic, structural and rapid perceptual aids to word recognition can be most efficiently taught to pupils of varying capabilities and linguistic backgrounds.

Current debate, for instance, centers on the relative efficiency of teaching phonics and other word recognition aids by means of what have been termed the synthetic and analytic approaches. In the synthetic method the child learns the regular graphemic representations of sounds and then is helped to synthesize the sounds into words. The analytic method, on the other hand, proceeds from an analysis of the whole word which is then broken up into its pronounceable units.

A longitudinal study was reported by Bear who compared matched groups of first-grade pupils who were taught by the analytic and synthetic approaches to phonics.¹ In this study seven classes of first-grade children were taught phonics using the Hay-Wingo program, a synthetic program in terms of the definition above, and seven comparable classes were taught beginning reading using the analytic

approach to phonics as outlined in the manuals of the Row Peterson materials, with the only difference being in the approach used to teach phonics. At the end of one year of instruction in reading, differences in performance on the Gates Primary Reading Tests and the Metropolitan Achievement Test favored the group using the synthetic approach to phonics. A follow-up study of the pupils after they had completed the sixth grade found that the group which had utilized the synthetic method of phonics in the first grade was significantly superior in performance on the vocabulary section of the Gates Reading Survey although no differences were found between the groups on the Comprehension and Speed sections of the test.

On the other hand, a study reported by² Morgan and Light appears to contradict these findings. Using randomly selected groups of fifty boys and fifty girls from two schools, one school of which used the Phonetic Keys to Reading while the other used the Scott Foresman basal program, the investigators compared reading programs in the third grade. Results of testing with the Gates Reading and California Achievement tests favored the Scott Foresman basal materials with its analytic approach to phonics. These two studies reflect the lack of unanimity among research findings concerning the proper way in which to teach phonics and the amount of emphasis to devote to this aspect of a word recognition program.

Recent attention in beginning reading has revolved around the issue of how to attack the problem of best preparing children to cope with the many inconsistencies in phoneme-grapheme relationships in English. In the recent past, reading materials generally have been produced with little attempt to control beginning vocabulary from the standpoint of sound-symbol relationships. There has been little effort to introduce only those words whose sounds are represented more or less consistently in writing. In the past few years, however, interest has been renewed in the possibility that a major reason for early difficulties in reading is the relative inconsistency of our alphabetic code for transcribing speech. Bloomfield and Barnhart have attempted to simplify the process of learning to read by introducing in the early stages of reading only regularly-represented words.³ Fries has prepared beginning reading materials of a somewhat similar nature.⁴ Research is needed to determine whether or not this control of vocabulary is wise in light of the multitude of inconsistencies which the child will encounter in later reading. Sister Mary Edward attempted to find some preliminary answers to this question by comparing groups of fourth-grade pupils from the parochial schools of Detroit, Michigan and Dubuque, Iowa.⁵ The Dubuque schools used a composite basal method alone while the Detroit system utilized a modified linguistic method in addition to a composite basal approach. When measured by

a variety of reading tests at the beginning of the fourth grade, the group using the linguistic materials in addition to the basal program performed significantly better on a majority of the tests. However, the question of whether or not materials with only "regular" words such as the Bloomfield-Barnhart materials should be used as the basic program in beginning reading instruction has not been adequately investigated.

B. Initial Teaching Alphabet (ITA) Approach

The ITA approach to the teaching of reading recognizes that English, like all languages, is linguistic and thus does have sounds attributable to various print symbols or combinations of print symbols. The fact that these sounds are not always uniformly designated or spelled by print symbols creates a problem -- the most important problem associated with the phonetic approach to the teaching of reading. Thus five out of every eight words in the dictionary must be respelled so that the adult mature reader who uses the dictionary can work out the pronunciation of the word and relate it to its spelling. Indeed, many of the commonly taught phonetic verbalizations are effective less than half the time. One favorite illustration is the generalization that "when two vowels go walking, the first one does the talking." This means simply that the first vowel is long and the second one is silent. The fact of the matter is, as shown by Dr. Clymer in a classic study, that this works only forty-seven per cent of the time. We teach the rule in phonetics, however, because it applies more often than any other generalization that could be made about this situation.

To be sure, certain generalizations do work one hundred per cent of the time. Thus a "k" before an "n" is silent. But there are, I believe, only about forty words in the dictionary to which this may be applied, and only about five of these words are in a basic vocabulary of the type introduced in the early grades.

One approach to circumventing this problem is the initial teaching alphabet (ITA) approach. This approach involves a new orthography, one in which more characters are added to our alphabet. Thus instead of a twenty-six letter alphabet, the student learns a forty-three character alphabet. These forty-three characters each have specific sounds and provide sufficient sounds to take care of our language. In addition to using these forty-three characters, the children learn to use diacritical marks. Thus if the vowel is long, they place a "long mark" -- i.e., the proper diacritical sign -- over the vowel. Similarly short vowels are designated as such. After the children learn to read and write with these symbols and marks, they are switched to the regular alphabet.

It is an interesting point that the Japanese decided to teach reading utilizing a newly constructed alphabet with forty-five phobes or letters. These letters, each of which have specific sounds, are combined to form words which previously had been represented by the extraordinarily complex Chinese symbols. The new alphabet is taught in the classroom in Japan, one of the most literate nations in the world. They soon found, however, that they needed to teach word recognition by a diversified approach if they were to avoid certain types of reading difficulties.

Thus far children subjected to the initial teaching alphabet approach seem to learn very readily. One cause for concern, however, is that children who learn this way tend to be more analytical and thus become word-by-word readers. In other words, the problems associated with the phonetic approach to reading, the worst result of which is exemplified by the reader who actually moves his lips as he sounds out each word, tend to be intensified by the initial teaching alphabet approach. A second cause for concern relates to the conversion of the forty-three character alphabet to the standard alphabet. In the course of doing this, will the children be able to spell accurately or will they take with them patterns which cannot readily be converted to conventional spelling?

The study under way will hope to provide insight into these questions.

C. The Linguistic Approach

The linguistic approach to the teaching of reading recognizes the irregularity of our language and attempts, in systematic fashion, to provide the child with the ability to cope with these irregularities.

The linguistic system comprises a four-stage approach. In the first stage the child is taught to distinguish print signals, that is, letters and combinations of letters to which specific sounds may be attributed. Thus the child learns to differentiate between the various letters of the alphabet and between the various letter combinations. Unlike the phonetic approach, however, he does not learn to sound out these letters or letter combinations; he merely learns visually to distinguish them. Thus the linguistic approach stresses the fact that you must see letters or letter combinations and see them effectively in order to associate them with spoken language.

In other words, the linguistic approach is concerned with words as codes. Since a large body of English words are indeed spelled regularly, why not teach the rules relating to the sound patterns and to the alphabetical symbols or groups of symbols which apply to this large area in which there are no exceptions. But, unlike the phonetic method, the linguistic approach stresses visual discrimination before it relates letters or groups of letters to sound

patterns. Thus the child learns to see that there is a difference between cat, fat, and bat. After he can distinguish this difference visually, he is taught rules which allow him to pronounce these words.

Thus in the second stage, regularly spelled words are introduced, such as fat, cat, and bat -- i.e., words which are related and easily learned utilizing rules.

The third stage involves the introduction of the semi-regular words where the child uses rules in addition to some recognition of irregularities. Finally completely irregular words are introduced with the hope that by this time the child has enough background to cope with these.

There are many variations of the linguistic approach, including one, commonly termed the semi-linguistic approach, in which certain irregular words are taught by sight at the very start. Thus in this approach linguistics combines both the basal and phonetic methods.

It must be pointed out that this approach is not very exciting or stimulating, particularly to the very bright student. Structural approach, like linguistics, may indeed limit a child's creativity. Also, of course, many useful words do not fit into the regular pattern which strict linguistics require, and accordingly their introduction must be delayed. This again tends to limit the child's experiences in reading and his relationship with reading to his experiences outside of the reading class.

The modified linguistic approach tends to overcome the criticism that linguistic teaching is sterile since it allows only for the teaching of those words at the start which are regular. The modified approach introduces irregular words which are learned by sight and which make possible better content and meaning.

D. The Language Experience Approach

The language experience approach is a new method whose purpose is to develop a closer relationship between speaking, listening, reading and writing. Here the teaching of reading is not an end in itself; rather it is related to the rest of the child's world in the hope that reading will become meaningful and that the child will be so interested in it that its learning will proceed naturally.

In this method the child is encouraged, first of all, to talk and to relate experiences. The teacher, of course, must help him to gain experiences and to learn how to relate them. The child accordingly builds up a vocabulary from words which relate to these experiences. This vocabulary is collected by the teacher and used as a basis

for word recognition. Normally, of course, the recognition of these words which relate directly with the child's experiences is easily achieved.

At the same time the teacher encourages children to tell stories which she takes down in writing. These stories are typed and distributed to the class to allow each child to read what has evolved from incidents experienced and related by the students themselves. Once the student has mastered these simple stories, he is ready to start using textbooks.

At first the language experience approach utilizes the basal method and some linguistic techniques, but very little of the phonetic approach. Its great virtue is that it relates achievement in a very important skill -- reading -- to the child's experiences and to his emotional involvement in these experiences. Modern psychologists have pointed out numerous times that learning is most effective when it can be related to emotional involvement. The language experience approach tends to do this.

The results thus far indicate that the environment in classrooms using this approach is stimulating. Children become highly creative writers. How well these children actually learn to read, however, remains yet to be seen. The instructors who teach by this method are very busy people, since the method makes great demands of the teacher's skills and time.

VI. THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

As has been mentioned several times already, the role of the teacher in the teaching of reading cannot be overemphasized. There is more and more evidence that a diagnostic approach to classroom instruction can be the critical factor which determines success, failure, average results or superior results. The individual who teaches reading must be trained to diagnose the reading needs and correspondingly the instructional needs of the youngsters. Every study in the present research will undoubtedly demonstrate this, indicating that the differences between experiments and controls are never as great as the differences between teachers. The teacher is the critical element in the teaching of reading.

Analysis of the factors which lead to a teacher's success indicates invariably that the teacher's skill in analyzing reading growth to locate individual instructional needs is the key. Having analyzed these, the teacher must then make provision for the type of instruction which best fits the child's need. When the teacher discovers a word-by-word reader or one who is over-articulating, she must work with the child in building vocabulary background and concept development.

If, on the other hand, she discovers a child who has good analytical skills but is ineffective in using context and other meaning clues, she must work to remedy this defect. Another child may have a limited vocabulary and accordingly will require vocabulary building. Still another may read rapidly but with inaccuracies because his word perception techniques are faulty. Obviously, emphasis on skills is required here.

It is problems of this sort which provide the challenge to colleges of education. For it is here that the teacher's training in the diagnostic approach to the teaching of reading must start. Indeed the diagnostic approach is frequently described as one of the important approaches to the teaching of reading.

Admittedly, the diagnostic approach is a difficult one. It makes great demands on the teacher and relies heavily on the teacher's experience. This points up the need for classrooms made up of a small number of children who stay with the teacher for a long period. The fact that the approach is a difficult one, however, should not cause us to shy away from it. The demands of the modern world have made difficulty almost a value in itself. Our society is so complex that nothing worthwhile can be achieved without difficulty. This applies also to the teaching of reading. When we explore the factors under study in this research project, we are attempting to provide a basis for ameliorating the difficulties which a complex modern society has placed upon reading.

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APPENDIX C

A SUMMARY STATEMENT OF THE MINNEAPOLIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL READING PROGRAM

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December 16, 1963

BASIC AGREEMENTS ABOUT READING

Reading is knowing what the author is trying to communicate. It is getting meaning from and putting meaning into reading material that is interesting and useful. Reading involves both recognition and meaning of words and phrases and fusing these elements of meaning into a chain of ideas.

Children differ from each other in their amount of growth potential and in their rate and style of growth; they also differ in growth patterns within themselves in various areas of development. Children of the same age will vary in reading level of development and in command of particular skills.

As needs of individual children (needed skills or needed challenges) are observed and studied, the reading program will provide for:

1. Flexible grouping according to skill needs, common interests, and individual interests as well as total class experiences.
2. A variety of materials at different reading levels.
3. Selection of methods that will provide the motivation and skill development necessary for continuous progress.

Children should have a balanced reading program that provides for:

1. Continuous development of reading skills and abilities.
2. Reading skills particular to the content areas.
3. Experiences that extend literary appreciations.
4. Opportunities in personal reading.

The developmental reading program should provide for all children to the limit of their abilities experiences that:

1. Create a desire to read and an appreciation of what is read.

2. Broaden and deepen reading interests.
3. Develop skills of comprehension.
4. Develop a flexible attack to word recognition.
5. Develop essential study skills.
6. Develop the ability to read orally for self and group satisfaction.

Foundations for reading are laid through the development of concepts in multi-sensory experiences. These concepts develop through experiences, the children's verbal or other expressions of meaning inherent in the experiences, the reappearance of concepts in new situations where children must transfer understandings and/or reorganize ideas because of new elements.

These experiences occur before the children enter school. The kindergarten and first grade programs provide for these kinds of experiences. Throughout the elementary school there are new concepts that must be developed if the children are to understand as well as pronounce words that represent a new concept.

Comprehension is a myriad of skills which need to be directly taught, for example:

1. Selecting the main idea(s).
2. Finding supporting detail.
3. Anticipating and predicting outcomes.
4. Noting comparisons and contrasts.
5. Understanding relationships and implied meanings.
6. Differentiating between fact and opinion.
7. Assessing authenticity.
8. Drawing conclusions.
9. Making generalizations.

Children learn to recognize and pronounce new words through:

1. Sight recognition.
2. The meaning of the word in context.
3. The recognizable word parts or structure.
4. The sounds or phonetic elements.
5. Syllabication.
6. Dictionary aids.

Children are encouraged to use separate or combined approaches to learning new words, to be flexible in their use of the different skills they have learned.

Foundation learnings for study skills are developed in the early elementary grades as children:

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1. Locate different kinds of books.
2. Locate stories or information within books.
3. Find information from pictures, charts, graphs, maps.
4. Organize their ideas for presentation to others.

In the later elementary grades, children develop increasingly independent study habits. They learn to:

1. Use reference and library skills in the location of information.
2. Select appropriate resource materials.
3. Organize pertinent information in notes, outlines, summaries.
4. Interpret maps, graphs, charts.
5. Develop and/or use bibliographies.

Reading in the content areas demands particular skills. Special vocabulary needs to be identified. Background experiences - real or vicarious - help to develop or clarify concepts. The author's organization of content may need to be noted.

Differentiated experiences need to be planned to provide the right challenge for all children - experiences that are:

1. From books at many different reading levels.
2. With materials other than books to be read.

Some children may make continuous progress in reading but learn to read more slowly than others. They are sometimes referred to as delayed readers.

Some children do not learn to read as well as their potential would seem to predict because of factors that impede their learning. Some of the common causation factors of disabled readers are:

1. Vision, hearing, or speech difficulties.
2. Neurological disabilities.
3. Personality structure.
4. Emotional problems.
5. Sociological backgrounds.
6. Educational backgrounds.

Usually a cluster of factors impede the reading progress of these children.